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THE MUMMY!

A TALE

OF

THE TWENTY-SECOND CENTURY.

“Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?”

1 SAM., xxviii. 15.

By Louisa

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE long wished to write a novel, but I could not determine what it was to be about. I could not bear any thing common-place, and I did not know what to do for a hero. Heroes are generally so much alike, so monotonous, so dreadfully insipid—so completely brothers of one race, with the family likeness so amazingly strong—“This will not do for me,” thought I as I sauntered listlessly down a shady lane, one fine evening in June; “I must have something new, something quite out of the beaten path:—but what?—ay, that was the question. In vain did I rack my brains—in vain did I search the

storehouse of my memory : I could think of nothing that had not been thought of before.

“It is very strange!” said I, as I walked faster, as though I hoped the rapidity of my motion would shake off the sluggishness of my imagination. It was all in vain ! I struck my forehead and called wit to my assistance, but the malignant deity was deaf to my entreaty. “Surely,” thought I, “the deep mine of invention cannot be worked out ; there must be some new ideas left, if I could but find them.” To find them, however, was the difficulty.

Thus lost in meditation, I walked onwards till I reached the brow of a hill, and a superb prospect burst upon me. A fertile valley richly wooded, studded with sumptuous villas and romantic cottages, and watered by a noble river, that wound slowly its lazy course along, spread beneath my feet ; and lofty hills swelling to the skies, their summit lost in clouds, bounded the horizon. The sun was setting in all its splendour, and its lingering rays gave those glowing tints and deep masses of shadow to the landscape that sometimes pro-

duce so magical an effect. It was quite a Claude Lorraine scene; and more fully to enjoy it, I entered a hay-field, and seated myself upon a grassy bank. The day had been sultry; and the evening breeze, as it murmured through the foliage, felt cool and refreshing. "It is a lovely world," thought I, "notwithstanding all that cynics can say against it. Our own passions bring misery upon our heads, and then we rail at the world, though we only are in fault. Why should I seek to wander in the regions of fiction? Why not enjoy tranquilly the blessings Heaven has bestowed upon me?"

I felt too indolent to answer my own question; a delicious stillness crept over my senses, and the heaving chaos of my ideas was lulled to repose. A majestic oak stretched its gnarled arms in sullen dignity above my head; myriads of busy insects buzzed around me; and woodbines and wild roses, hanging from every hedge, mingled their perfume with that of the new-mown hay. I reclined languidly on my grassy couch, listening to the indistinct hum of the distant village, and feeling that de-

lightful sense of exemption from care, that a faint murmur of bustle afar off gives to the weary spirit, when suddenly the bells struck up a joyous peal—the cheerful notes now swelling loudly upon the ear, then sinking gently away with the retiring breeze, and then again returning with added sweetness. I listened with delight to their melody, till their softness seemed to increase; the sounds became gradually fainter and fainter; the landscape faded from my sight; a soft languor crept over me: in short, I slept.

It would be of no use to go to sleep without dreaming; and, accordingly, I had scarcely closed my eyes when, methought, a spirit stood before me. His head was crowned with flowers; his azure wings fluttered in the breeze, and a light drapery, like the fleecy vapour that hangs upon the summit of a mountain, floated round him. In his hand he held a scroll, and his voice sounded soft and sweet as the liquid melody of the nightingale.

“Take this,” said he, smiling benignantly; “it is the Chronicle of a future age. Weave

it into a story. It will so far gratify your wishes, as to give you a hero totally different from any hero that ever appeared before. You hesitate," continued he, again smiling, and regarding me earnestly : " I read your thoughts, and see you fear to sketch the scenes of which you are to write, because you imagine they must be different from those with which you are acquainted. This is a natural distrust: the scenes will indeed be different from those you now behold ; the whole face of society will be changed : new governments will have arisen ; strange discoveries will be made, and stranger modes of life adopted. The restless curiosity and research of man will then have enabled him to lift the veil from much which is (to him at least) at present a mystery ; and his powers (both as regards mechanical agency and intellectual knowledge) will be greatly enlarged. But even then, in his plenitude of acquirement, he will be made conscious of the infirmity of his nature, and will be guilty of many absurdities which, in his less *enlightened* state, he would feel ashamed to commit.

“ To no one but yourself has this vision been revealed: do not fear to behold it. Though strange, it may be fully understood, for much will still remain to connect that future age with the present. The impulses and feelings of human creatures must, for the most part, be alike in all ages: habits vary, but nature endures; and the same passions were delineated, the same weaknesses ridiculed, by Aristophanes, Plautus, and Terence, as in after-times were described by Shakspeare and Moliere; and as they will be in the times of which you are to write,—by authors yet unknown.

“ But you still hesitate; you object that the novelty of the allusions perplexes you. This is quite a new kind of delicacy; as authors seldom trouble themselves to become acquainted with a subject before they begin to write upon it. However, since you are so very scrupulous, I will endeavour, if possible, to assist you. Look around.”

I did so; and saw, as in a magic glass, the scenes and characters, which I shall now endeavour to pass before the eyes of the reader.

THE MUMMY.

CHAPTER I.

IN the year 2126, England enjoyed peace and tranquillity under the absolute dominion of a female sovereign. Numerous changes had taken place for some centuries in the political state of the country, and several forms of government had been successively adopted and destroyed, till, as is generally the case after violent revolutions, they all settled down into an absolute monarchy. In the meantime, the religion of the country had been mutable as its government; and in the end, by adopting Ca-

tholicism, it seemed to have arrived at nearly the same result: despotism in the state, indeed, naturally produces despotism in religion; the implicit faith and passive obedience required in the one case, being the best of all possible preparatives for the absolute submission of both mind and body necessary in the other.

In former times, England had been blessed with a mixed government and a tolerant religion, under which the people had enjoyed as much freedom as they perhaps ever can do, consistently with their prosperity and happiness. It is not in the nature of the human mind, however, to be contented: we must always either hope or fear; and things at a distance appear so much more beautiful than they do when we approach them, that we always fancy what we have not, infinitely superior to any thing we have; and neglect enjoyments within our reach, to pursue others, which, like *ignes fatui*, elude our grasp at the very moment when we hope we have attained them.

Thus it was with the people of England:—

Not satisfied with being rich and prosperous, they longed for something more. Abundance of wealth caused wild schemes and gigantic speculations; and though many failed, yet, as some succeeded, the enormity of the sums gained by the projectors, incited others to pursue the same career. New countries were discovered and civilized; the whole earth was brought to the highest pitch of cultivation; every corner of it was explored; mountains were levelled, mines were excavated, and the globe racked to its centre. Nay, the air and sea did not escape, and all nature was compelled to submit to the overwhelming supremacy of Man.

Still, however, the English people were not contented:—enabled to gratify every wish till satiety succeeded indulgence, they were still unhappy; perhaps, precisely because they had no longer any difficulties to encounter. In the meantime, education had become universal, and the technical terms of abstruse sciences familiar to the lowest mechanics; whilst questions of religion, politics, and metaphysics, agi-

tated by them daily, supplied that stimulus, for which their minds, enervated by over cultivation, constantly craved. The consequences may be readily conceived. It was impossible for those to study deeply who had to labour for their daily bread; and not having time to make themselves masters of any given subject, they only learned enough of all to render them disputatious and discontented. Their heads were filled with words to which they affixed no definite ideas, and the little sense Heaven had blessed them with, was lost beneath a mass of undigested and misapplied knowledge.

Conceit inevitably leads to rebellion. The natural consequence of the mob thinking themselves as wise as their rulers, was, that they took the first convenient opportunity that offered, to jostle these aforesaid rulers from their seats. An aristocracy was established, and afterwards a democracy; but both shared the same fate; for the leaders of each in turn, found the instruments they had made use of to rise, soon became unmanageable. The people had tasted the sweets of power, they had learned

their own strength, they were enlightened ; and, fancying they understood the art of ruling as well as their quondam directors, they saw no reason why, after shaking off the control of one master, they should afterwards submit to the domination of many. “ We are free,” said they ; “ we acknowledge no laws but those of nature, and of those we are as competent to judge as our would-be masters. In what are they superior to ourselves ? Nature has been as bountiful to us as to them, and we have had the same advantages of education. Why then should we toil to give them ease ? We are each capable of governing ourselves. Why then should we pay them to rule us ? Why should we be debarred from mental enjoyments and condemned to manual labour ? Are not our tastes as refined as theirs, and our minds as highly cultivated ? We will assert our independence, and throw off the yoke. If any man wish for luxuries, let him labour to procure them for himself. We will be slaves no longer ; we will all be masters.”

Thus they reasoned, and thus they acted,

till government after government having been overturned, complete anarchy prevailed, and the people began to discover, though, alas ! too late, that there was little pleasure in being masters when there were no subjects, and that it was impossible to enjoy intellectual pleasures, whilst each man was compelled to labour for his daily bread. This, however, was inevitable, for as perfect equality had been declared, of course no one would condescend to work for his neighbour, and every thing was badly done : as, however skilful any man may be in any particular art or profession, it is quite impossible he can excel in all.

In the meantime, the people who had, though they scarcely knew why, attached to the idea of equality that of exemption from toil, found to their infinite surprise, that their burthens had increased tenfold, whilst their comforts had unaccountably diminished in the same proportion. The blessings of civilization were indeed fast slipping away from them. Every man became afraid lest the hard-earned means of existence should be torn from his

grasp ; for, as all laws had been abolished, the strong tyrannized over the weak, and the most enlightened nation in the world was in imminent danger of degenerating into a horde of rapacious barbarians.

This state of things could not continue ; and the people, finding from experience that perfect equality was not quite the most enviable mode of government, began to suspect that a division of labour and a distinction of ranks were absolutely necessary to civilization ; and sought out their ancient nobility, to endeavour to restore something like order to society. These illustrious personages were soon found : those who had not emigrated, had retired to their seats in the country, where, surrounded by their dependants, and the few friends who had remained faithful to them, they enjoyed the *otium cum dignitate*, and consoled themselves for the loss of their former greatness, by railing most manfully at those who had deprived them of it.

Amongst this number, was the lineal descendant of the late royal family, and to him the

people now resolved humbly and unconditionally to offer the crown; imagining, with the usual vehemence and inconsistency of popular commotions, that an arbitrary government must be best for them, as being the very reverse of that, the evils of which they had just so forcibly experienced.

The prince, however, to whom a deputation from the people made this offer, happened not to be ambitious. Like another Cincinnatus, he placed all his happiness in the cultivation of a small farm, and had sufficient prudence to reject a grandeur which he felt must be purchased by the sacrifice of his peace. The deputies were in despair at his refusal; and they reurged their suit with every argument the distress of their situation could inspire. They painted in glowing colours the horrors of the anarchy that prevailed, the misery of the kingdom and despair of the people; and at last wound up their arguments by a solemn appeal to Heaven, that if he persisted in his refusal, the future wretchedness of the people might fall upon his head. The prince, how-

ever, continued inexorable ; and the deputies were preparing to withdraw, when the prince's daughter, who had been present during the whole interview, rushed forward and prevented their retreat :—" Stay ! I will be your queen," cried she energetically ; " I will save my country, or perish in the attempt !"

The princess was a beautiful woman, about six-and-twenty ; and, at this moment, her fine eyes sparkling with enthusiasm, her cheeks glowing, and her whole face and figure breathing dignity from the exalted purpose of her soul, she appeared to the deputies almost as a supernatural being ; and regarding her offer as a direct inspiration from Heaven, they bore her in triumph to the assembled multitude who awaited their return : whilst the people, ever caught by novelty, and desirous of any change to free them from the misery they were enduring, hailed her appearance with delight, and unanimously proclaimed her Queen.

The new sovereign soon found the task she had undertaken a difficult one ; but happening luckily to possess common sense and prudence,

united with a firm and active disposition, she contrived in time to restore order, and to confirm her own power, whilst she contributed to the happiness of her people. The face of the kingdom rapidly changed—security produced improvement—and the self-banished nobles of the former dynasty crowding round the new Queen, she chose from amongst them the wisest and most experienced for her counsellors, and by their help compounded an excellent code of laws. This book was open to the whole kingdom ; and cases being decided by principle instead of precedent, litigation was almost unknown : for as the laws were fully and clearly explained, so as to be understood by every body, few dared to act in open violation of them, punishment being certain to follow detection ; and all the agonizing delights of a law-suit were entirely destroyed, as every body knew, the moment the facts were stated, how it would inevitably terminate. This renewal of the golden age continued several years without interruption, the people being too much delighted with the personal comforts

they enjoyed, to complain of the errors inseparable from all human institutions; whilst the remembrance of what they had suffered during the reign of anarchy, made them tremble at a change, and patiently submit to trifling inconveniences to avoid the risk of positive evils.

This generation however passed away, and with it died, not only the recollection of the past misfortunes of the kingdom, but also the spirit of content they had engendered. A new race arose, who, with the ignorance and presumption of inexperience, found fault with every thing they did not understand, and accused the Queen and her ministers of dotage, merely because they did not accomplish impossibilities. The government, however, was too firmly established to be easily shaken. The judicious economy of the Queen had filled her treasury with riches; her prudent regulations had extended the commerce of her subjects to an almost incredible extent; and her firm and decided disposition made her universally respected both at home and abroad. The malcontents were therefore awed into submission, and

obliged, in spite of themselves, to rest satisfied with growling at the government they were not strong enough to overturn. At this time, however, the Queen died, and the state of affairs experienced an important change.

It has been before mentioned, that the religion of the country had altered with its government. Atheism, rational liberty, and fanaticism, had followed each other in regular succession ; and the people found, by fatal experience, that persecution and bigotry assimilated as naturally with infidelity as superstition. A fixed government, however, seemed to require an established religion ; and the multitude, ever in extremes, rushed from excess of liberty to intolerance. The Catholic faith was restored, new saints were canonized, and confessors appointed in the families of every person of distinction. These priests, however, were far from having the power they had possessed in former times. The eyes of men had been too long opened to be easily closed again. Education still continued amongst the lower classes ; and though, at the time this history

commences, it was going out of fashion with persons of rank, its influence was felt even by those most prejudiced against it. During the reign of the late Queen, the minds of the public not having any state affairs to occupy them, had been directed to the improvement of the arts and sciences ; and so many new inventions had been struck out, so many wonderful discoveries made, and so many ingenious contrivances put into execution, that poor nature seemed degraded from her throne, and usurping man to have stepped up to supply her place.

Before the Queen died, she chose her niece Claudia to succeed her ; and as she enacted that none of her successors should marry, she ordered that all future queens should be chosen, by the people, from such female members of her family as might be between twenty and twenty-five years of age, at the time of the throne's becoming vacant. Every male throughout the kingdom who had attained the age of twenty-one, was to have a voice in this election ; but as it was presumed it might be inconvenient to convoke these numerous electors into one place,

it was agreed that every ten thousand should choose a deputy to proceed to London to represent them, and that a majority of these deputies should elect the Queen. This scheme, however, though feasible in theory, seemed likely to present some difficulties when it was to be put in practice; but of these, the old Queen never troubled herself to think. She had provided against any immediate disturbance by choosing her own successor, and she left posterity to take care of itself.

Queen Claudia was one of those *fainéant* sovereigns of whom it is extremely difficult to write the history, for the simple but unanswerable reason, that they never perform any action worthy of being recorded. However, though she did not do much good, she seldom did any harm: she thus contrived to escape either violent censure or applause; and, in short, to get through life very decently, without making much bustle about it. She continued the same counsellors that had been employed by her predecessor, appointing the sons, when the fathers died, to save trouble. She left the laws as she

found them for the same reason ; and, in short, she let the affairs of government go on so quietly, and so exactly in the same routine as before, that for two or three years after her accession, the people were scarcely aware that any change had taken place.

The commencement of the year 2126 was, however, marked by symptoms of turbulence. The malcontents, secretly encouraged by Roderick, King of Ireland, and suffered to gain strength under the easy sway of Claudia, rose to arms in different parts of the kingdom ; and marching to London, attempted to seize the person of the Queen. For the moment, the regular forces of the kingdom seemed paralysed, and the insurgents would have succeeded in their daring attempt, but for the presence of mind and valour of Edmund Montagu, a young officer of ancient family, a captain in the Queen's body-guard, who had the good fortune to rescue his sovereign.

This circumstance was decisive ; the rebels, disappointed in their hopes, and imperfectly organized, gave way everywhere before the re-

gular troops, who had now recovered from their stupor ; whilst the Queen, whose gratitude for the timely succour afforded by Edmund Montagu was unbounded, made him commander of her forces in Germany, and the youthful hero quitted England to take possession of his post.

CHAPTER II.

HIGH and distinguished as was the favour shown to Edmund Montagu, it was by no means greater than he deserved. His face and figure were such as the imagination delights to picture as a hero of antiquity ; and his character accorded well with the majestic graces of his person. Haughty and commanding in his temper—ambition was his God, and love of glory his strongest passion ; yet his very pride had a nobleness in it, and his soldiers loved though they feared him.

Very different was the character of his younger brother Edric, whose romantic disposition and

contemplative turn of mind often excited the ridicule of his friends. As usual, however, in similar cases, the persecutions he endured upon the subject, only wedded him more firmly to his own peculiar opinions ; which, indeed, he seemed determined to sustain with the constancy of a martyr ; whilst he put on such a countenance of resolution and magnanimity whenever they were assailed by jests or raillery, as might have been imagined suitable to an expiring Indian at the stake. Unfortunately, however, his friends did not always properly estimate this dignified silence ; and their repeated bursts of laughter grated so harshly in the ears of the youthful Diogenes, that he became gradually disgusted with mankind. He secluded himself from society ; despised the opinion of the world, because he found it was against him ; and supposed himself capable of resisting every species of temptation, simply because, as yet, he had met with nothing adequate to tempt him. Older and more experienced persons have made the same mistake.

The education of these two young men had

been entrusted to tutors of characters as essentially different as those of their pupils.—Father Morris, who had had the care of the elder, was an intelligent Catholic priest, the confessor of the family. Whilst Doctor Entwerten, who took charge of the younger, was a worthy inoffensive man, whose passion for trying experiments was his leading foible ; but whose good-nature caused him to be beloved, even by those to whom his follies made him appear ridiculous.

Sir Ambrose Montagu, the father of Edmund and Edric, was a widower, and these two sons constituted his whole family. The worthy Baronet was no bad representative of what an old English country gentleman always has been, and of what it still continued, even in that age of refinement. He was as warm in his feelings as hasty in his temper, and as violent in his prejudices, as any of his predecessors. In fact, the same causes must always lead to the same results ; and there is something in a country life that never fails to produce certain peculiar effects upon the mind.

Sir Ambrose, however, was far superior to the generality of his class, and amongst innumerable other good qualities, he was an indulgent master and an affectionate father. His foible, however,—for alas ! where shall we find character without one,—was a desire to show occasionally how implicitly he could be obeyed. In general, he was easy to a fault ; and it was only when roused by opposition, that the natural obstinacy of his disposition displayed itself. Edmund was his favourite son ; the early military glory of the youthful hero was flattering to his parental pride, and his eyes would glisten with delight at the bare mention of his darling's name.

It was one fine evening in the summer of the year 2126, when Sir Ambrose Montagu, such as we have described him, was sitting in his library, anxiously expecting intelligence from the army. To divert his impatience, he had ordered the attendance of his steward Mr. Davis, and endeavoured to amuse himself by hearing a report of the affairs of his farm ; whilst Abelard,

an old butler, who had been in the Baronet's service more than forty years, stood behind his master's chair holding a small tray, on which was placed an elegant apparatus for smoking, and a magnificent service of malleable glass, made to fold up to a pocket size, when not in use, containing the baronet's evening refreshment.

Sir Ambrose was above seventy; and his long white hair hung in waving curls upon his shoulders, as he now sat in his comfortable elastic arm-chair, leaning one elbow upon the table before him. His features had been very handsome, and his complexion still retained that look of health and cleanness, which, in a green old age, is the sure indication of a well-spent life. His countenance, though intelligent, was unmarked by the traces of any stormy passions; the cares and troubles of life seemed to have passed gently over him, and content had smoothed the wrinkles age might have made upon his brow; whilst the tall thin figure of Mr. Davis, as he stood reverentially bending forward, his hat in his hand, and his whole de-

meanour expressing a singular mixture of preciseness and habitual respect, contrasted strongly with the dignified appearance of his master.

The windows of the library opened to the ground, and looked out upon a fine terrace, shaded by a verandah, supported by trellis-work, round which, twined roses mingled with vines. Below, stretched a smiling valley, beautifully wooded, and watered by a majestic river winding slowly along; now lost amidst the spreading foliage of the trees that hung over its banks, and then shining forth again in the sun like a lake of liquid silver. Beyond, rose hills majestically towering to the skies, their clear outline now distinctly marked by the setting sun, as it slowly sunk behind them, shedding its glowing tints of purple and gold upon their heathy sides; whilst some of its brilliant rays even penetrated through the leafy shade of the verandah, and danced like summer lightning upon the surface of a mirror of polished steel which hung directly in face of Sir Ambrose.

“What a lovely evening!” exclaimed the worthy baronet, gazing with a delighted eye upon the rich landscape before him; “often as I have looked upon this scene, methinks every time I see it I discover some new beauty. How finely that golden tint which the sun throws upon the tops of those trees is relieved by the deep masses of shadow below!”

“It is a fine evening,” said Davis, bowing low, “and if your honour pleases, I think we had better get the patent steam-mowing apparatus in motion to-morrow. If the sun should be as hot to-morrow as it has been to-day, I am sure the hay will make without using the burning glass at all.”

“Do as you like, Davis,” returned his master, taking his pipe, “you know I leave these matters entirely to you.”

“And does not your honour think I had better give the barley a little rain? It will be all burnt up, if this weather continues; and if your honour approves, it may be done immediately, for I saw a nice black heavy-looking cloud sail-

ing by just now, and I can get the electrical machine out in five minutes to draw it down, if your honour thinks fit."

"I have already told you I leave these things entirely to you, Davis," returned the baronet, puffing out volumes of smoke from his hookah. "Inundate the fields if you will; you have my full permission to do whatever you please with them, so that you don't trouble me any more about the matter."

"But I would not wish to act without your honour's full conviction," resumed the persevering steward. "Your honour must be aware of the aridity of the soil, and of the impossibility that exists of a proper developement of the incipient heads, unless they be supplied with an adequate quantity of moisture."

"You are very unreasonable, Davis," said Sir Ambrose; "most of your fraternity would be satisfied by being permitted to have their own way; but you——"

"Excuse my interrupting your honour," cried Davis, bowing profoundly; "but I cannot bear it to be thought that I was capable of

persuading your honour to take any steps, your honour might not thoroughly approve: Now as to the germinization and ripening——”

“ My good fellow !” exclaimed Sir Ambrose, smiling at the energy with which Davis spoke—his thin figure waving backwards and forwards in the sunshine, and his earnest wish to convince his master, almost depriving his voice of its usual solemn and sententious tone. “ As I said before, I give you full and free liberty to burn, dry, or drown my fields, as you may think fit; empowering you to take any steps you judge proper, either to germinate or ripen corn upon any part of my estate whatever, only premising, that in future you never trouble me upon the subject; and so good night.”

This being spoken in a tone of voice Davis did not dare to disobey, he slowly retired, apparently as much annoyed at having his own way, as some people are at being contradicted; when suddenly a brilliant flash of light gleamed on the baronet’s polished mirror. “ Ah! what was that ?” exclaimed Sir Ambrose, starting up, and dashing his pipe upon the ground.

He gazed eagerly upon the mirror for a few seconds in breathless anxiety, bending forwards in a listening attitude, and not daring to stir, as though he feared the slightest movement might destroy the pleasing illusion. The flash was repeated again and again in rapid succession, whilst a peal of silver bells began to ring their rounds in liquid melody. "Thank God ! thank God !" exclaimed the aged baronet, sinking upon his knees, and clasping his hands together, whilst the big tears rolled rapidly down his face, "My Edmund has conquered ! my Edmund is safe !"

The faithful servants of Sir Ambrose followed the example of their master, and for some minutes the whole party appeared lost in silent thanksgiving ; the silver bells still continuing their harmonious sweetness, though in softer and softer strains, till at last they gradually died away upon the ear. Sir Ambrose started from his knees as the melody ceased, and desiring Abelard to summon Edric and Father Morris, he rushed upon the terrace, followed by Davis, to examine a telegraph placed

upon a mount at little distance, so as to be seen from one end of it: the light and music just mentioned, being a signal always given, when some important information was about to be transmitted.

The sun had now sunk behind the hills, and the shades of evening were rapidly closing in as the baronet, with streaming eyes, watched the various movements of the machine. “One, two, and six!” said he; “yes, that signifies he has won the battle, and is safe. My heart told me so, when I saw the signal flash. My darling Edmund!—two, four, and eight—he has subdued the Germans, and taken the whole of the fine province of France. Six, six, and four—alas! my failing eyes are too weak to see distinctly. Davis, look I implore you! The signal is changing before we have discovered its meaning! For mercy’s sake, look before it be too late! Alas! alas! I had forgotten your eyes are as feeble as mine own. Oh, Davis! where is Edric? Why is not he here to assist his poor old father at such a moment as this?”

In the meantime, Edric was, as usual, engaged in those abstract speculations with Dr. Entwerfen, which now formed the only pleasure of his existence, and which he pursued with an eagerness that made all the ordinary affairs of life appear tasteless and insipid. His imagination had become heated by long dwelling upon the same theme ; and a strange, wild, undefinable craving to hold converse with a disembodied spirit haunted him incessantly. He had long buried this feverish anxiety in his own breast, and tried in vain to subdue it ; but it seemed to hang upon his steps, to present itself before him wherever he went, and, in short, to pursue him with the malignancy of a demon.

“What is the matter with you, Edric?” said Dr. Entwerfen to his pupil, the day we have already mentioned. “You are so changed, I scarcely know you, and your eyes have a wild expression, absolutely terrific.”

“I am, indeed, half mad,” returned Edric, with a melancholy smile ; “and yet, perhaps, you will laugh when I tell you the reason of

my uneasiness. I am tormented by an earnest desire to communicate with one who has been an inhabitant of the tomb. I would fain know the secrets of the grave, and ascertain whether the spirit be chained after death to its earthly covering of clay, condemned till the day of final resurrection to hover over the rotting mass of corruption that once contained it; or whether the last agonies of death free it from its mortal ties, and leave it floating, free as air, in the bright regions of ethereal space?"

"You know my opinion," said the doctor.

"I do," replied the pupil; "but forgive me if I add—I do not feel satisfied with it: in fact mine is not a character to be satisfied with building my faith upon that of any other man. I would see, and judge for myself."

"I do not blame you," resumed the doctor; "a reasonable being should believe nothing he cannot prove;—however, to remove your doubts, I am convinced we have only occasion to step into the adjoining church-yard, and try my galvanic battery of fifty surgeon power, (which you must allow is surely enough to

reanimate the dead,) upon a body, and then——”

“ Hold ! hold ! ” cried Edric, shuddering. “ My blood freezes in my veins, at the thought of a church-yard:—your words recall a horrible dream that I had last night, which, even now, dwells upon my mind, and resists all the efforts I can make to shake it off.”

“ Tell it to me, then,” resumed the doctor; “ for when the imagination is possessed by horrible fantasies, it is often relieved by speaking of them to another person.”

“ I thought,” said Edric, “ that I was wandering in a thick gloomy wood, through which I had the utmost difficulty to make my way. The black trees, frowning in awful majesty above my head, twined together in masses, so as almost to obstruct my path. Suddenly, a fearful light flashed upon me, and I saw at my feet a horrid charnel house, where the dying mingled terrifically with the dead. The miserable living wretches turned and writhed with pain, striving in vain to escape from the mass of putrescence

heaped upon them. I saw their eye-balls roll in agony—I watched the distortion of their features, and, making a violent effort to relieve one who had almost crawled to my feet, I shrank back with horror as I found the arm I grasped give way to my touch, and a disgusting mass of corruption crumble beneath my fingers!—Shuddering I awoke—a cold sweat hanging upon my brows, and every nerve thrilling with convulsive agony.”

“ Mere visionary terrors,” said the doctor. “ You have suffered your imagination to dwell upon one subject, till it is become morbid.—However, though I do not see any reason why your dream should make you decline my offer, I will not urge it if it give you pain.”

“ Is it not strange,” continued Edric, apparently pursuing the current of his own thoughts, “ that the mind should crave so earnestly what the body shudders at ; and yet, how can a mass of mere matter, which we see sink into corruption the moment the spirit is withdrawn from it, shudder ? How can it even feel ? I can scarcely analyse my own sensations ;

but it appears to me that two separate and distinct spirits animate the mass of clay that composes the human frame. The one, the merely vital spark which gives it life and motion, and which we share in common with brutes, and even vegetables ; and the other, the divine ethereal spirit, which we may properly term the soul, and which is a direct emanation from God himself, only bestowed upon man."

" You know my sentiments upon the subject," replied the doctor, " therefore I need not repeat them."

" I know," resumed Edric, " you think the organs of thought, reflection, imagination, reason, and, in short, all that mysterious faculty which we call the mind, material ; and that as long as the body remains uncorrupted they may be restored, provided circulation can be renewed : for that you think the only principle necessary to set the animal machine in motion."

" Can any thing be more clear ?" said the doctor. " We all know that circulation and the action of the lungs are inseparably connected, and that if the latter be arrested, death

must ensue. How frequently are apparently dead bodies recovered by friction, which produces circulation; and inflation of the lungs with air, which restores their action. If your idea be correct, that the soul leaves the body the instant what we call death takes place, how do you account for these instances of resuscitation? Think you that the soul can be recalled to the body after it has once quitted it? Or that it hovers over it in air, attached to it by invisible ligatures, ready to be drawn back to its former situation, when the body shall resume its vital functions? You cannot surely suppose it remains in a dormant state, and is reawakened with the body; for this would be inconsistent with the very idea of an incorporeal spirit."

"Certainly," resumed Edric, "the spirit must be capable of existing perfectly distinct from the body; though how, I own candidly my imperfect reason cannot enable me to comprehend."

"I wish you would overcome your childish reluctance to trying an experiment upon a

corpse, as that must set your doubts at rest. For if we could succeed in reanimating a dead body that has been long entombed, so that it might enjoy its reasoning faculties, or, as you call it, its soul in full perfection, my opinion would be completely established."

"But where shall we find a perfect body, which has been dead a sufficient time to prevent the possibility of its being only in a trance?—For even if I could conquer the repugnance I feel at the thought of touching such a mass of cold mortality, as that presented in my dream last night, according to your own theory, the organs must be perfect, or the experiment will not be complete."

"What think you of trying to operate upon a mummy? You know a chamber has been lately discovered in the great pyramid, which is supposed to be the real tomb of Cheops; and where, it is said, the mummies of that great king and the principal personages of his household have been found in a state of wonderful preservation."

“ But mummies are so swathed up.”

“ Not those of kings and princes. You know all travellers, both ancient and modern, who have seen them, agree, that they are wrapped merely in folds of red and white linen, every finger and even every toe distinct ; thus, if we could succeed in resuscitating Cheops, we need not even touch the body ; as the clothing it is wrapped in will not at all encumber its movements.”

“ The idea is feasible, and, as you rightly say, if it can be put into execution, it will set the matter at rest for ever. I should also like to visit the pyramids, those celebrated monuments of antiquity, whose origin is lost in the obscurity of the darker ages, and which seem to have been spared by the devastating hand of time, purposely to perplex the learned.”

“ You say right,” cried the doctor with enthusiasm. “ And who can tell but that we may be the favoured happy mortals, destined to raise the mystic veil that has so long covered them ? we may be destined to explore these

wonderful monuments—to revive their mummies, and force them to reveal the secrets of their prison-house. Cheops is said to have built the great pyramid, and it is Cheops whom we shall endeavour to re-animate! what then can be more palpable, than that it should be he who is destined at length to reveal the mystery.”

“ Every word you utter, doctor, increases my ardent desire to put our scheme into immediate execution: but how can we accomplish it? How obtain my father’s consent? You know it has long been his intention to marry me to the niece of his friend the Duke of Cornwall, and you know how obstinate both he and the duke are.”

“ Then if you remain in England, it is your intention to marry Rosabella?”

“ I would perish first.”

“ If that be the case, I confess I do not see the force of your objection.”

“ True; for as long as I refuse to marry her, their anger will be the same, whether I travel or remain in England. In fact, I shall be hap-

pier at a distance than here, where I shall be annoyed by having the subject constantly recurred to. Yet it pains me to speak upon it to my father. He has so long cherished the idea of my marriage, and dwelt upon it so fondly—

“Then you had better stay,—relinquish all thoughts of scientific discoveries, and settle contentedly on an estate in the country; employing your time in regulating your farm, settling the disputes of your neighbours, and bringing up your children, if you should happen to have any.”

“How can you torment me so?—If you could imagine the struggle in my bosom, between inclination and duty, you would pity me.”

“Do you think your presence necessary to your father’s happiness?”

“No—if Edmund be with him, he will never think of me.”

“And do you not think—nay, are you not certain, that an union with Rosabella would make you miserable?”

“It is impossible to doubt it. Her violent temper, and the mystery which hangs over the

fate of her father, which she cannot bear to have even alluded to, forbid the thought of happiness as connected with her."

"It is strange, so little should be known of her father. I never heard the particulars of his story."

"No human being knows the whole, I believe, but the duke and my father. However, I remember to have heard it rumoured when I was a child, that he had committed some fearful crime, and that he was either executed, or had destroyed himself."

"Then it is not surprising that it should pain Rosabella to hear him spoken of. But to return to our subject: your answers have removed the only doubts that can arise; and after what you have confessed yourself, I cannot imagine what further hesitation you can feel—"

At this moment they were both startled; and the words were arrested on the doctor's lips by a gentle tap at the door. It was old Abelard the butler. Half ashamed of the unphilosophic terror he had evinced, the doctor felt glad to be

able to hide his emotion under the appearance of anger, and demanded peevishly, what was the matter. "Have I not told you a hundred times," continued he, "that I do not like to be interrupted at my studies! and that nothing is more disagreeable than to have one's attention distracted, when it has been fixed upon an affair of importance!"

"I do not attempt to controvert the axiom you have just propounded," returned Abelard, speaking in a slow precise manner, as though he weighed every syllable before he drawled it forth: "for undeniable facts do not admit of contradiction. However, as the message with which I stand charged at the present moment relates to master Edric, instead of yourself, I humbly opine, no blame can attach itself to me, on account of the unpremeditated interruption of which you allege me culpable."

"And what have you to say to me?" demanded Edric.

"That the worthy gentleman, your respectable progenitor, requests you instantly to put in exercise your locomotive powers to join him

on the terrace, to the end, that there your superior visual faculties may afford *soulagement* to the mental anxiety under which he at present labours, by aiding him to develop the intelligence conveyed to him by the telegraphic machine."

"What!" exclaimed Edric, eagerly, and then, without waiting a reply, he darted forward, and in a few seconds was by the side of his father.

Abelard gazed after him with amazement: "There is something very astonishing," said he, addressing Dr. Entwerfen, "in the effervescence of the animal spirits during youth. I labour under a complete acatalepsy upon the subject; I should think it must arise from the excessive elasticity of the nerves. Ideas strike—" but here, happening unfortunately to look up, he too was struck to find Dr. Entwerfen had vanished with his pupil, and unwilling to waste his eloquence upon the empty air, he also departed; slowly and solemnly, however, according to his custom, to join the party assembled on the terrace.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Edric and Dr. Entwerfen reached Sir Ambrose, they found Father Morris at his side, explaining with his usual promptness and clearness the meaning of the different signs of the telegraph.

“My dear Edric,” exclaimed Sir Ambrose, throwing himself into the arms of his son, “my dear, dear Edric! your brother has gained the battle! The Germans are completely overthrown. He has taken their king, and several of their princes prisoners; and the fine province of France is ceded to us entirely!”

“I am rejoiced to hear it,” cried Edric, returning his father’s embrace with emotion, “and he, I hope, is safe?”

“ I hope so too,” replied Sir Ambrose ; “ though he says nothing of himself : but you know Edmund : ‘ Our troops won this,’ ‘ our army gained that !’—‘ the soldiers fought bravely !’—he never speaks of himself. To hear him relate a battle, nobody would imagine he had ever had any thing to do with it.”

“ It is too dark to see any more,” said Father Morris, who had been for some time watching the telegraph, and now turned from it in despair ; “ the machine is still in motion, but it is too dark for me to decipher what it means.”

The attention of all present was directed to the sky as he spoke. It was indeed become of pitchy blackness, a general gloom seemed to hang over the face of nature ; the birds flew twittering for shelter, a low wind moaned through the trees, and, in short, every thing seemed to portend a storm.

“ Had we not better return to the house ?” said Dr. Entwerfen, looking round with something like fear at these alarming indications, for his heated imagination had not yet quite recovered the effect of the awful speculations

he had so lately been indulging in. "What is that black spot there? I declare it moves! Good heavens, what can it be?"

"Really, doctor!" returned Abelard, "you provoke the action of my risible faculties. That opaque body which you perceive at a little distance, and which seems to have occasioned such a fearful excitement of your nervous system, is only a living specimen of the *corvus* genus, who has probably descended upon earth to search for his vermicular repast."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Abelard," rejoined Mr. Davis, speaking with his usual precision, "but, according to my humble apprehension, you labour under a slight mistake as to that particular. The feathered biped that has so forcibly attracted your attention, appears to me, not one of the *corvi*, but rather one of the *graculi*; a variety of extremely rare occurrence in this vicinity, and which are sometimes called *incendriæ aves*, from their unfortunate propensity to put habitations in combustion, by picking up small pieces of phlogisticated carbon, and carrying them in their beaks to the combination of

straw and other materials, sometimes piled upon the apex of a house, to defend it from the inroads of pluviosity."

"It is of no use," sighed Sir Ambrose, still straining his eyes to endeavour to decipher the movements of the telegraph, the outlines of which only now appeared, stamped as if in jet, and strongly relieved by the dark grey sky beyond.

"It is of no use," reiterated Father Morris, and the whole party were preparing to retire, when suddenly a vivid light flashed upon them from the hill, and instantly a long line of torches seemed to stream along the horizon. "He is coming home, but will write more to-morrow," exclaimed the whole party simultaneously; for all knew well by experience, the meaning of that signal. "He is coming home, thank God!" repeated Sir Ambrose, his pallid lips quivering, and every limb trembling with agitation.

"Look to my father," cried Edric, "he will faint."

"Oh no, no!" repeated Sir Ambrose: "thank God! thank God!"

“Lean upon me, at least,” said Edric, affectionately.

Sir Ambrose complied ; and, supported by his son, still gazed anxiously on the torches, their red glare shedding an unnatural light around them, and making the surrounding darkness only appear still more intense. Thunder now growled in the distance, and rain began to fall in large drops ; yet still Sir Ambrose gazed upon the torches, and could not be persuaded to leave the terrace. These wild, fearful looking lights, gleaming through the tempest, seemed a connecting link between him and his darling son ; and it was not till they were obscured by the thick heavy rain, and even the outline of the telegraph vanished in the gathering clouds around, that he could be induced to seek for shelter.

Sir Ambrose slept little that night : the sleep of age is easily broken, and perhaps the joyful agitation of his spirits had produced a slight access of fever. He rose with the dawn ; and, long before the rest of his family had descended, summoned Abelard, that he might dispatch

him to inform his most intimate friend the Duke of Cornwall of the news.

“Go,” said he, as soon as the drowsy butler made his appearance. “I am sure the duke feels nearly as great an interest in the success of Edmund as myself, and will not be displeased if he be disturbed a little earlier than usual upon such an occasion.”

“I obey,” replied Abelard. “I will shake off my somnolent propensities, and speed with the velocity of the electric fluid to the castle of the noble chieftain.”

“Take heed you do not forget your message by the way,” repeated Sir Ambrose, smiling.

“Not all the waters of Lethe could wash such somnifugous tidings from my memory,” replied the butler. “Your honour’s words are imprinted upon the mnemonic organ of my brain; and my sensorium must be divided from my cerebellum ere they can be effaced.”

The Duke of Cornwall had been the intimate friend of Sir Ambrose almost from infancy. They had been companions at school and at college; besides which, peculiar circumstances

which had happened in their youth, had linked them together in indissoluble ties. What these circumstances were, however, no one exactly knew, except the parties concerned, and they always avoided alluding to them. All that was generally understood upon the subject, being, that Sir Ambrose had, in some manner, been instrumental in saving the duke's life ; but how, when, or where, was never clearly explained.

The Duke of Cornwall was of the Royal family of England, and closely allied to the throne. His father had been brother to that prince who had so stedfastly refused the crown when it was offered to him by the ambassadors from the people ; and as that prince had left no male descendants, the duke might be considered as legitimately entitled to reign. The thought of disturbing by his claims the female dynasty now established, had, however, never entered into the mind of the duke ; who, with half the sense of his friend Sir Ambrose, possessed, at least, ten times the obstinacy ; and having taken it into his head

that he would marry his daughter Elvira to Edmund Montagu, and his niece Rosabella to Edric, he turned all his thoughts, plans, and wishes to the accomplishment of this object, and suffered no other idea to interfere with it.

Those, however, who were acquainted with the characters of the young people, thought the duke had quite reversed the natural order of things by this arrangement ; and that the strong mind and haughty spirit of Rosabella would have suited better with the ambitious Edmund ; whilst the soft yielding disposition and feminine graces of Elvira seemed to harmonize exactly with the taste of the philosophic Edric. No persuasions, however, could induce the duke to deviate in the slightest degree from his design. Like many of the higher classes of society in those days of universal education, he affected an excessive plainness and simplicity in his language ; so much so, indeed, as sometimes almost to degenerate into rudeness, in order that it might be clearly distinguished from the elaborate and scientific expressions of the vulgar ;

and when urged upon the subject of these intended marriages, he would roughly say, "Don't talk to me ; there is nothing like a little contradiction in the married life. If two people were to agree to live together, who were always of the same opinion, they would die of ennui in six months. No, no, I 'm right, and so they 'll find it in the end."

He would then shake his head, and put on such a look of positive determination, that his friends would generally retire in silence, feeling it perfectly in vain to attempt to alter his resolution. As to consulting the inclinations of the young people themselves, the idea never entered his imagination. "Children don't know what is good for them," he would reply sharply, if any one presumed to suggest such a thought, "and it is the duty of parents and guardians to decide in such matters."

Sir Ambrose, wishing the connection for his sons, and respecting even the whims of his friend, had as yet never interfered, and the young people had also appeared silently to acquiesce. Rebellious spirits, however, were hidden under

this apparent calm ; and the duke was soon to learn from experience, that human beings were rather more difficult to manage than a drove of turkeys, or a flock of sheep ; a fact, of which before he did not seem to have the slightest suspicion.

The duke had already risen, and was in his garden, when the messenger of Sir Ambrose arrived panting for breath, and quite exhausted by the velocity which, as he expressed it, he had employed in endeavouring to execute with the utmost expedition, the implied wishes of his master. The duke was surprised to see him.—“What brings you out so early, Abelard ?” demanded he.

“Oh, your grace,” replied the butler, gasping for utterance, “the haste I have made has impeded my respiration ; and the blood, finding the pulmonary artery free, rushes with such force along the arterial canal to the aorta, that—that—I am in imminent danger of being suffocated.”

“Pshaw !” said the duke.

“Besides,” continued Abelard,” a saline

secretion distils from every pore of my skin, in a serous transudation, from the excessive exertions I have made use of."

"And what has occasioned these violent exertions?"

"The earnest desire experienced by Sir Ambrose to transmit with all the expedition possible, to your grace, the intelligence he has just received of the acquisition of a victory by Master Edmund, in the hostile territory of Germany."

Victory!" shouted the duke, "Victory—Rosabella! Elvira! where are you, girls? Here's tidings to rouse you from your slumbers.—And how is he, Abelard? Is the brave boy safe himself? God bless him! victory will be nothing to us, if we are to lose him."

"It occasions me excessive chagrin," replied Abelard, "that I am totally unable to resolve that interrogatory to your grace's complete satisfaction. Taciturnity, however, upon some subjects, is, I believe, generally considered synonymous with prosperity; and, as Master Edmund, to the best of my credence, conveyed no

information relative to his sanity in the communication made by him to his paternal ancestor, I humbly opine that there are no reasonable grounds for supposing it has suffered any material deterioration in consequence of the late sanguinary encounter in which he has been engaged."

The duke had not patience to wait the conclusion of this speech ; but hobbled away as fast as his infirmities would permit, vociferating for Elvira and Rosabella, in a voice that might have silenced Stentor ; and Abelard, finding himself alone, was fain to follow his example, marvelling as he went along, however, at the excessive impatience of the fiery spirits of the age, which would not permit people to remain stationary, even to hear, what he called, a compendious replication to the very questions which they themselves had propounded.

Whatever faults might fall to the share of the Duke of Cornwall, that of a cold heart was certainly not amongst the number, and the delight he felt on hearing of Edmund's triumph could not have been greater if the youthful

hero had been his own son. His eyes, indeed, absolutely sparkled with transport, when he communicated the intelligence to his niece and daughter ; and his tidings were not bestowed upon insensible ears, for the breasts of both his youthful auditors throbbed with pleasure at the news, though the causes of their emotions were different. Elvira had been the idol of Edmund's homage from her childhood ; and she fancied she returned his passion with equal fervour ; but she deceived herself, and love was as yet a stranger to her heart. Endowed with great beauty and superior talents ; accustomed from her earliest infancy to be worshipped by all around her ; surrounded by flatterers, till even flattery itself had lost its charm, Elvira was as yet insensible to love ; why she was so, we leave to philosophers to explain ; we merely state facts and leave others to draw conclusions.

Rosabella's character was essentially different from that of her cousin. Passion was the essence of her existence ; and her dark eyes flashed a fire that bespoke the intensity of her

feelings. She loved Edmund, but though she loved him with all that overwhelming violence, that only a soul like hers could feel, yet she would not have scrupled to sacrifice even him to her revenge, if she had thought he treated her with negligence or contempt. She scorned the opinion of the world, and regarded mankind in general but as slaves, whom she should honour by trampling beneath her feet. Ambition, however, was her leading passion, and even her love for Edmund struggled in vain for mastery against it. This feeling was now highly gratified by the tidings of Edmund's victory. She triumphed in his glory ; and a deeper glow burnt upon her cheek, from the proud consciousness she felt that she had not placed her affections upon an unworthy object.

“ We have no time to lose, girls,” said the duke. “ I would not miss being with Sir Ambrose when he receives his letter, for kingdoms. Here, Hyppolite ! Augustus ! get a balloon ready, and let us be off directly. How tedious these fellows are ! They might have removed

a church steeple in the time they have wasted about that balloon."

"If your grace would have a moment's patience," said Hyppolite, holding the cords of the balloon. But his Grace had no patience; it was an ingredient Nature had quite forgotten to put into his composition; and, without waiting for the ascending ladder to be put down, he sprang into the car in such haste the moment the balloon was brought to the door, that he was in imminent danger of oversetting it. "So! so!" said he, "very well! that will do,—and now girls, that you are safely embarked, we will be off. Hyppolite! you will steer us:—and, Abelard, go you into the buttery, and let my fellows give you something to eat; you will want something after your fatigues. 'There! there, that will do; don't let us hinder a moment ——;" and the rest of his speech was lost in air, as the balloon floated majestically away.

"It has often appeared very astonishing to me," said Abelard, after watching the balloon till it was out of sight, "to observe how partial

great people are generally to an aërial mode of travelling; for my part, I think the pedestrian manner infinitely more agreeable."

"*De gustibus non est disputandum*," replied Augustus, the duke's footman, to whom this observation was addressed:—"But I think I observe symptoms of lassitude about you, Mr. Abelard. Will you not adjourn to the apartment of Mrs. Russel, our housekeeper, to repair by some alimentary refreshment, the excessive exhaustion you have sustained in the course of your morning's exertions?"

"Willingly, Mr. Augustus.—I own candidly, I feel the want of a little wholesome nutrition. I shall, besides, be extremely happy to avail myself of the opportunity fortune so benignantly presents, of paying my respects to Mrs. Russel, whom I have not seen these three days."

The worthy housekeeper was equally rejoiced with Abelard at this instance of fortune's benignity; a sort of sentimental flirtation having been going on between them for the last

thirty years. She accordingly stroked down her snow-white apron, re-adjusted her mob cap, and smoothed her grey hairs, which were divided upon her forehead, with the most scrupulous exactness, before she advanced to welcome her visitors. "What will you take, my dear Mr. Abelard?" said she, as soon as he was within hearing; "what can you fancy? I have a delicious corner of a cold venison pasty in my pantry."

"Words are altogether too feeble to express the transports of my gratitude at receiving so gracious an accolade, beauteous Eloisa," replied the romantic butler; for thus, in allusion to his own name, was he wont to call her. "But though you had only the rigours of the Paraclete to invite me to, instead of the comforts of your well-stored pantry, still would words be wanting to express the feeling of my bosom on thus again beholding you."

"Spare my blushes!" said Mrs. Russel, casting her eyes upon the ground, and playing with a corner of her apron. "I feel a roseate

suffusion glow upon my cheeks, as your flattering accents strike upon the tympanum of my auricular organs.”

“Oh, Mrs. Russel!” sighed Abelard, gazing upon her tenderly;—then, after a short pause, he continued: “As to the aliments with which your provident kindness would soulage my appetite—though venison be a wholesome viand, and was reckoned by the ancients efficacious in preventing fevers, and though the very mention of the savoury pasty makes the *eryptæ*, usually employed in secreting the mucus of my tongue, erect themselves, thereby occasioning an overflow of the saliva, yet will I deny myself the indulgence, and content myself simply with a boiled egg, as being more likely to agree with the present enfeebled state of the digestive organs of my stomach.”

“You shall have it instantly,” cried Mrs. Russel.

“And will you have the kindness to superintend the culinary arrangement of it yourself?” rejoined Abelard. “I do not like the albumen too much coagulated; and I prefer it

without any butyraceous oil, simply flavoured by the addition of a small quantity of common muriate of soda."

The egg was soon prepared and devoured. "Thank you, thank you! dear Mrs. Russel," said Abelard; "this refection was most acceptable. I had felt for some time the gastric juice corroding the coats of my stomach; and still, though I have now given it some solid substance to act upon, I think it would not be amiss to dilute its virulence by the addition of a little fluid. Have you any thing cool and refreshing?"

"I have some bottled beer," replied Mrs. Russel; "but I am afraid the carbonic acid gas has not been sufficiently disengaged during the process of the vinous fermentation to render it wholesome; and there is scarcely any alcohol in the whole composition——"

"That is exactly what I want," said Abelard; "for my physicians have expressly forbidden stimulants. Provided the gluten that forms the germ was properly separated in the preparation of the malt, and the seed sufficient-

ly germinated to convert the fecula into sugar, I shall be perfectly satisfied."

"I can guarantee the accuracy of its preparation both with regard to the malt and the beer," repeated Mrs. Russel; and the frothing fluid soon sparkled in a goblet, to the infinite satisfaction of the thirsty butler, who, after a hearty draught, vowed nectar itself was never half so delicious; and that all the gods on Olympus would envy him, if they could but taste his fare, and see the blooming Hebe that was his cup-bearer."

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN the balloon of the duke approached the habitation of Sir Ambrose, its occupiers perceived the worthy baronet walking with hasty strides towards the mount of the telegraph, which commanded an extensive view of the surrounding country, followed by Edric and Dr. Entwerfen, who appeared vainly endeavouring to persuade him to relax a speed so little suited to his advanced years.

“Talk not to me of going slowly, when I expect news of my darling Edmund!” exclaimed Sir Ambrose, continuing his rapid pace—his heart beating with paternal pride, and his countenance beaming with exultation.

“I am also anxious to hear of my brother,”

said Edric, "but after the information we have already received by the telegraphic dispatch, it appears to me that we have little more to learn of importance."

"Edric, you are not a father, and you can have no idea of a father's anxiety," replied Sir Ambrose, hurrying on to the mount, as though he hoped the rapidity of his motion would afford some relief to the impatience of his mind; whilst the party of the duke, seeing the point to which he was hastening, opened the valves of their balloon, and made preparations to descend upon the same spot.

The duke and Sir Ambrose were always glad to meet, but as the present occasion was one of more than ordinary interest, so they now greeted each other with more than ordinary pleasure. The duke had always been warmly attached to Edmund, and his voice actually trembled with agitation as he exclaimed:—

"Well, my old friend, you see your brave boy is determined to keep us alive still. Our blood would stagnate in our veins, if he did

not give us a fillip now and then to rouse us. But what does the young rogue say of himself? I hope he's not wounded?"

"He never mentions himself," replied Sir Ambrose, tears glistening in his eyes, as he pressed the hand of his friend warmly in his own; "Edmund loves his country too devotedly to think of either peril or reward in her service."

"But he shall have a reward!" cried the duke, laughing; "ay and a fitting one too! Eh, Elvira, what say you?"

Elvira blushed, smiled, and looked down, as young ladies generally do upon such occasions; whilst Sir Ambrose, who had now reached the summit of the mount, was too eagerly looking round in every direction to hear his friend's remark.

In those days, the ancient method of conveying the post having been found much too slow for so enlightened a people, an ingenious scheme had been devised, by which the letters were put into balls and discharged by steam-cannon, from place to place; every

town and district having a piece of *toile metal-lique*, or woven wire, suspended in the air, so as to form a kind of net to arrest the progress of the ball, and being provided with a cannon to send it off again, when the letters belonging to that neighbourhood should have been extracted : whilst, to prevent accidents, the mail-post letter-balls were always preceded by one of a similar description, made of thin wood, with a hole in its side, which, collecting the wind as it passed along, made a kind of whizzing noise, to admonish people to keep out of the way.

The mount on which Sir Ambrose now stood, commanded an extensive view, and the scene it presented was beautiful in the extreme. On one side, innumerable grass fields, richly wooded, and only divided from each other by invisible iron fences, appeared like one vast park ; whilst, on the other, the waving corn, its full heads beginning to darken in the sun, gave a rich glowing tint to the landscape. But Sir Ambrose thought not of the prospect, he did not even see the murmuring brooks and shady

groves, the smiling vales and swelling hills, that constituted its beauty; no, his attention was wholly occupied by a small black spot he had just discovered on the edge of the horizon. In breathless anxiety, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, he bent eagerly forwards, gazing on this small and at first almost imperceptible speck. It gradually grew larger and larger—it rapidly approached! and in a few seconds a slight noise buzzed through the air, as the long-expected balls whizzed past him.

Sir Ambrose's agitation was excessive; with trembling limbs and livid lips, he hurried to the nearest station, which luckily was close at hand, and round which several of his household were assembled, in their impatience to hear the news. Sir Ambrose could not speak, but the person whose province it was to sort the letters guessed his errand, and opening the bag held forth the ardently expected treasure. Gasping for breath, Sir Ambrose eagerly attempted to take it, but his hands were unequal to the task, the violence of his emotion

overpowered him, and after a short, but fruitless struggle, he fell senseless on the ground.

The confusion produced by this unexpected incident, was indescribable. The old duke walked up and down, wringing his hands, and exclaiming, "What shall we do? What will become of us?" whilst the rest of the party endeavoured to give assistance to Sir Ambrose.

"Parental affection," said Davis, who had an unfortunate propensity for making long speeches precisely at the moment when nobody was likely to attend to him, "Parental affection has been universally allowed by all writers, both ancient and modern, to be one of the strongest passions of the soul, and the most exalted instances might be produced of the surprising energy of this universal sentiment."

"For Heaven's sake help me to raise my father," cried Edric: "Give him air, or he will die!"

"Patience," continued Davis, "is necessary in all things, and is perhaps one of the most useful and estimable qualities of life. It enables us to bear, without shrinking, the bitter-

est evils that can assail us. Without patience, philosophy would never have made those wonderful discoveries that subjugate nature to our yoke."

"Fetch me some water," exclaimed Edric, "or he will expire before your eyes."

"It appears to me," said a labourer, who had been mending a steam digging-machine in a neighbouring field, and who now stood leaning upon his work, and looking on gravely at all that passed, without attempting to offer the least assistance;—"It appears to me that it would be highly improper to administer the aqueous fluid in its natural state of frigidity, under the existing circumstances. The present suspension of animation under which Sir Ambrose labours, is evidently occasioned by want of circulation. Now, as it is the property of hot liquors, rather than cold ones, to supply the stimulant necessary for the reproduction of circulation, I opine that hot water would answer the purpose better than cold."

In the mean time Father Morris had brought some water from a neighbouring fountain, and

throwing it on the patient's face, Sir Ambrose opened his eyes: for some moments he stared wildly around him, but, as soon as he began to recollect what had passed, he implored Father Morris to give him his ardently desired letter.

“ You are not yet equal to reading it,” said Father Morris compassionately; “ I fear the exertion will be too much for you.”

“ Oh giye it me ! give it me,” exclaimed the poor old man; “ if a spark of mercy remain in your soul, do not keep me in this agony !”

It was impossible to resist the tone of real anguish that accompanied these words, as Father Morris put the letter into his hands.— Sir Ambrose took it eagerly; though he trembled so, that he could scarcely break the seal. At last, he tore it open and gazed at its contents, but he could not read a word; he dashed away his tears, and rubbed his eyes impatiently—all was in vain—the writing was still illegible — “ Read ! read !” cried he, in a voice trembling with agitation, “ For Heaven's sake, read !—will no one have pity on me ?”

Father Morris took the letter, and read it

aloud, whilst Sir Ambrose sate—his eyes raised to Heaven, his hands clasped together, and the tears rolling down his aged cheeks, listening to his words, and drinking in every syllable. After giving a circumstantial account of the battle, and assuring his father that he had not been wounded, Edmund proceeded thus. “The Queen has written me a letter of approbation in her own hand, and has been graciously pleased to signify her intention of honouring me with a triumphal entry into London; she has likewise conferred upon me letters of nobility. The goodness of my sovereign makes a deep impression upon my breast; but for the rest, I assure you that neither the applauses of the multitude, nor the privilege of writing Lord before my name, can afford a moment’s satisfaction to a heart that pants only for the pleasure of seeing again those most dear to it; nor shall I enjoy my triumph unless those I love be present to give it zest.”

“I congratulate you, my dear patron!” exclaimed Father Morris, as soon as he had finished; “I congratulate you from my inmost soul!”

“Go to his triumph!” exclaimed the duke, rubbing his hands in ecstasy; “Yes, yes, that we will; won’t we, my old friend? God bless him! I’m glad he is not hurt, though. And so, you see, in spite of all his glory, he can’t be happy without us. How prettily he says that! —‘Not all the approbation of my sovereign, the praises of the people’—nor—nor—what is it? I don’t remember the exact words, but I know the sense was, that he couldn’t be happy without us, and, God bless him! I’m sure I’m as happy as he can be, at the thought of seeing him.”

Sir Ambrose could not reply, but the tears ran down his aged cheeks like rain, as his heart breathed a silent offering of thanksgiving to the Almighty Being who had thus bestowed victory upon his son; and his lips murmured some inarticulate sounds of transport; whilst Elvira and Rosabella mingled their tears with his, for joy often becomes painful and seeks for a relief like grief.

The party now slowly returned to the mansion of Sir Ambrose, so completely occupied in dis-

cussing Edmund's letter, as to be totally unaware that Edric had not accompanied them; yet such was the case. The youthful philosopher's heart had swelled almost to bursting, as he had listened to the reading of his brother's letter, and he now rushed into a thick wood, shelving down to a romantic stream, which formed part of the pleasure-grounds of Sir Ambrose.

Almost without knowing where he was going, Edric plunged amongst the trees, and threw himself upon a grassy bank under their shade, upon the border of the rivulet. The gentle murmuring of the water, gave a delightful sense of refreshing coolness, particularly agreeable from the burning heat of the day; and Edric lay, his eyes fixed upon the sparkling waves as they danced in the sunbeams, with both his hands pressed firmly upon his throbbing temples, endeavouring in vain to analyze the new and strange emotions that struggled for mastery in his bosom. By degrees he became more calm; and though his heart still beat with feelings he could not quite explain, he felt soothed by the softly gliding streamlet; and the stormy pas-

sions of his breast seemed lulled to tranquillity as one hand fell carelessly down by his side, and the other merely supported the head it no longer constrained.

It was not envy that occasioned Edric's emotions; but shame and indignation burnt in his bosom when he recollected that he was wasting his days in comparative obscurity, whilst his brother, only a few years older than himself, was ennobling the name bequeathed to him by his ancestors.

“And cannot I also become famous?” thought he, his heart swelling with emulation. “Though I abhor the profession of a soldier, are not other ways open to me of attaining eminence? Why should I not exert myself? I will remain in indolence no longer. I, too, will prove myself worthy of my forefathers, and show the world that the exalted blood of the Montagus has not degenerated in my veins!” His eyes sparkled with the thought, and he half raised himself, as though eager to put it into immediate execution. A moment's reflection, however, restored him to himself, and he could not

help smiling at his own folly. "And yet I call myself a philosopher," thought he: "Alas! alas! how little do we know ourselves; and after all, the pursuit of knowledge is the only employment worthy of a man of sense: the transitory applause of the multitude, it is beneath him to accept. Nature is the goddess I adore; and if it should be granted to me to explore her secrets, I shall be the happiest of mankind. But why should I pass my life in anxious cravings never destined to be realized? The events of to-day have only proved yet more clearly the little value my society is of to my father. Were I absent, I should soon be forgotten. Why then should I not travel and satisfy these restless wishes that gnaw at my heart and poison every pleasure? I was not born to rest contented with the dull routine of domestic life, and I detest hypocrisy: I will seek my father; and, explaining my real sentiments, break off this hated marriage and set off for Egypt immediately."

Satisfied with this resolution, Edric rose and walked hastily towards his father's mansion,

with all that inward vigour which the consciousness of having made up one's mind is certain to bestow; and which, perhaps, is one of the most agreeable sensations that can be experienced by the human mind, as that of suspense or indecision is undoubtedly one of the most unpleasant.

Edric found his father and the duke busily engaged in consulting upon their intended journey, which was an event in both their lives; for as, since the universal adoption of balloons, journies were performed without either trouble or expense, the rich had lost all inducement to undertake them, and it was rare for a man of rank to quit his family mansion unless he had some post at court.

“I have a palace in London,” said the duke, “which I hope you will make your home; though it has been so long unused that I doubt whether it will be fit for your reception.”

“Do not distress yourself about making arrangements for my family,” replied Sir Ambrose; “for you know I have a brother living in London, and though we have not seen each

other for years, I think upon such an occasion as this I ought to forget all animosity, and visit him, if he will receive me."

"True," rejoined the duke; "I never thought of that: but you are quite right. Though he did make a foolish marriage, the ties of blood are too strong to be easily shaken off, and this is an excellent opportunity for a reconciliation."

"Another thing also weighs with me," continued Sir Ambrose: "you know that though I was so much hurt at his marriage, I was in some measure the cause of it."

"You the cause of it!" exclaimed the duke, in excessive surprise.

"You know," resumed Sir Ambrose, "my brother was always a bookworm; and the last time I visited him, I found him so uncomfortable, and his domestic affairs so dreadfully neglected, that I advised him to get an active managing woman to act as housekeeper. He did so, and in twelve months made her—Mrs. Montagu."

"I always thought your brother was too learned to know any thing useful, and too clever

to be able to take care of himself; but I own I never suspected him of being such a fool as to marry."

"Perhaps I was a greater one than himself in resenting his conduct, for I believe they get on very well. Mrs. Montagu does not want sense."

"I do not doubt her abilities, or that she was extremely well fitted for her original station; but very different qualities are required in the wife of Mr. Montagu from those which were suited to his housekeeper."

"I know it; and also that there is perhaps nothing more difficult than for a person in her situation to preserve the medium between affectation and vulgarity. However, I am told that though Mrs. Montagu cannot quite divest herself of the pedantry she acquired at a charity-school in her youth; and though she still talks as learnedly as if she had never ventured beyond the precincts of the kitchen; yet, that she makes my brother a good wife, and they say her daughter Clara is a charming girl."

“I can imagine nothing good springing from such a source.”

“Prejudice ! my dear duke, sheer prejudice !”

“Well, well, I will say no more about it ; for, as you justly say, if Mrs. Montagu makes your brother a good wife, and he is happy with her, I don’t see any right any body else has to trouble himself about the matter : and so, as I don’t like quarrels in families, I think you are quite right in wishing to see your brother. However, if they do not make you comfortable, I hope you ’ll remember you have another friend, and so we ’ll now wish you good day : come, girls !”

And the old duke trotted off, followed by his fair companions. Edric’s heart throbbed violently when he found himself alone with his father ; the moment was arrived he had been so ardently wishing for, and yet he was silent. He had scarcely had patience to wait the end of his father’s conference with the duke ; and whilst it had lasted, he had been arranging and re-arranging a thousand times in his mind, the phrases he meant to make use of ;

yet now they seemed to have all vanished from his memory, and he stood gazing through the open window, his mind feeling a perfect chaos, and without being able to recollect one single word of what he had determined to say. Sir Ambrose, in the mean time, felt perfectly happy, and in the buoyancy of his spirits tapped his son upon the shoulder.

“What all amort ! Sir Knight of the Woeful Countenance,” said he ; “Come, come ! I will have no gloomy looks to-day. But, hey-day ! what is the matter with you, Edric ? You don’t smile—are you unhappy ? You look as if you had something upon your mind.”

“I have something upon my mind, my dear father,” said Edric, solemnly ; “and something that I wish to communicate to you.” He stopped when he had said this, but Sir Ambrose did not reply, and, for some minutes, neither spoke. At length, Edric broke the pause, which had been one of perfect agony to him, and, speaking very fast, he exclaimed, “Yet I don’t know why I should hesitate. It is that I do not love Rosabella—that I never can

marry her—that I should be entirely miserable even to think of it—and, that this is my fixed and unalterable determination.”

“Heyday!” cried Sir Ambrose; “what is all this? Not marry Rosabella!”

“Never; no tortures should induce me! I am convinced she would make me wretched,” continued Edric, hurrying through what he meant to say. “Our tempers don’t assimilate. We should both be miserable. I should be very sorry to cause either you or the duke a moment’s uneasiness—very sorry—I would die first! But to marry Rosabella would be worse than dying a thousand deaths—we should be the most wretched of human beings, and you would be unhappy at seeing me so.”

“Mercy on me!” cried Sir Ambrose, heaving a deep sigh, and feeling almost out of breath at the volubility of his son. “I thought you dumb just now, but I see that you can use your tongue fast enough when the subject pleases you. Not marry Rosabella! Is the boy mad? Is she not young, beautiful, and highly accomplished? What would you have,

I wonder? You certainly must be out of your senses to refuse such a woman; and one too, so superior to yourself, in rank and fortune."

"In fortune I allow her to be superior; but I think the mystery attached to the name of her father, more than compensates for any difference of rank."

"Don't talk about what you can't understand. Duke Edgar is dead, and his faults should be buried with him; besides, it is hard the girl should suffer for the sins of her father."

"What were those sins, my dear Sir? I have often heard them darkly hinted at, as something almost too dreadful to mention; but I never heard the particulars."

"Edric," said Sir Ambrose, solemnly, "if you have the least regard for my feelings, or entertain any duty for me as a son, never again advert to that subject. Circumstances there are relating to it, of a deep, awful, and mysterious nature, with which I am well acquainted, but which I have taken a solemn oath never to reveal. Never speak of them again; the bare

remembrance makes me shudder—oh ! would to Heaven I could forget them !”

“ I am very sorry, Sir, that my question was such as to give you pain : but rest assured that my curiosity shall never again annoy you.”

“ I am not angry with you, Edric. You could not know the feelings your question would create in my bosom, and it was natural you should wish to know something of the father of your intended wife. However, think no more of him. Consider the present duke as your future father-in-law ; and if possible forget that such a person as Duke Edgar ever existed.”

“ You forget, Sir,” said Edric, firmly but respectfully, “ that I have before declared my determination never to marry Rosabella.”

“ Nonsense !” rejoined his father, “ you don’t know what you are talking about. The world would call me as mad as yourself if I were to let you act so foolishly : besides, what would the duke say ?”

“ To speak candidly, Sir, that is what principally annoys me ; for I trust that your good

sense and affectionate disposition will soon enable *you* to see the affair in its proper light."

"That is to say, you think I am an old fool, and that you can coax me to any thing you please. But you shall find your error. You shall learn I will not be coaxed; I will be obeyed. You shall marry Rosabella, or you shall leave my house."

"My dear father!" said Edric, attempting to take Sir Ambrose's hand.

"Away, Sir!" cried his father, shaking him off, "obedience far outweighs words. If I am your dear father, you will act in compliance with my wishes; and if you do not, it is a mockery to call me 'dear.'"

"I cannot marry Rosabella."

"Was ever such obstinacy!—such folly! The world will think you distracted."

"I care not for the world!" cried Edric, impatiently.

"Youth like!" returned his father. "It is very strange no one will be contented to take experience at second-hand. They must buy it for themselves, and sometimes pay very

dear for it before they profit by its lessons. You talk like a child, Edric : when you get a little older, you will find practice and theory very different things. You say you despise the world : but you are wrong, the world must not be despised ; nay more, it ought not to be even slighted. As long as you live in it, you must conform to its opinions : it is ridiculous to think otherwise. I don't like to hear people say they don't care for the world ; the world must be cared for ; and when people pretend to scorn it, it is generally because they are aware they have done something to make it scorn them."

"But, my dear father ! you would not wish me to sacrifice my conscience to its dictates."

"And pray, Sir, what has your conscience to do with the matter in question ?"

"Should I not sacrifice it by marrying a woman I feel I could never love ? In my opinion, nothing can be more sacred than the marriage vow ; and with what feelings could I enter into this solemn engagement in the presence of Almighty God, calling upon him to witness it,

when I knew my heart was at variance with my words? My soul would recoil with horror at such blasphemy."

"You talk about your conscience, Edric,—but should you not rather say your inclinations? The person of Rosabella does not please your fancy, I suppose; and to gratify a capricious whim, you would destroy the happiness of your father, and ruin your own prospects for ever."

"It is not of the person of Rosabella that I complain, my dear father;—I allow her to be beautiful as a Venus, and that her talents even exceed her personal charms: but when I see her large black eyes flashing fury, and her rosy lips curved into an expression of indignant scorn, I forget her beauty, and think only of the fearful passions of her soul."

"Your objections are futile, Edric; at any rate, they are of no avail. You must marry her—I am sorry it is against your inclination, but I will not have my authority disputed:—besides, the disappointment to the duke would be dreadful. It was but this morning that he proposed, that as soon as you and Edmund

should marry, I should give up my estate to you, and he his to your brother, whilst we two old folks should retire to the cottage on the hill; and pass the remainder of our lives in contemplating with rapture the happiness of our children."

"I own the duke is so obstinate—"

"So, you have discovered that, have you? Well, you are right there; for when he has taken a fancy into his head, no arguments can turn him from his point. But there is a difference between obstinacy and firmness. Now, though I am not obstinate like the duke, you shall find I can be firm, Edric. However, as I have always been an indulgent father, I do not wish to decide hastily now, and I give you a week to make up your mind: at the expiration of which time you shall marry Rosabella or quit my house for ever. No reply, young man, I will not hear a word. Begone; leave me now, and in a week's time let me know your decision."

It was in vain to attempt a reply; and Edric left his father's presence oppressed by that strange, mysterious presentiment of evil, which, like a fearful cloud, dark, gloomy, and impene-

trable, sometimes hangs upon our thoughts, foreboding horrors ; though so dimly and indistinctly, that, like all the gigantic phantoms we sometimes fancy through the mist of twilight, their terrors seem increased tenfold by the very uncertainty that half shrouds them from our sight. Mingled with these feelings, however, was one of wild, unearthly joy. Driven from his father's house, he would be free to travel—his doubts might be satisfied—he might, at last, penetrate into the secrets of the grave ; and partake, without restraint, of the so ardently desired fruit of the tree of knowledge. Nothing would then be hidden from him. Nature would be forced to yield up her treasures to his view—her mysteries would be revealed, and he would become great, omniscient, and god-like. His mind filled with a chaos of thoughts like these, which he strove in vain to arrange, and which seemed to swell his brain almost to bursting, Edric involuntarily strolled again into the wood he had so lately quitted, and again throwing himself upon the banks of the murmuring stream, he was soon lost in a reverie.

CHAPTER V.

IN the mean time, different emotions were agitating violently the bosoms of the two lovely heiresses of the duke. When they reached the castle, each of them retired to her separate apartment to ruminate upon what had passed. Confidence did not exist between them, for confidence requires congeniality of mind, and those of the fair cousins were essentially different. Each princess, however, had a favourite attendant, or rather a companion, in whose bosom she was in the habit of pouring her thoughts; and, on their arrival at the castle, they parted immediately, equally eager to find their respective confidants, and inform them of all that had happened. Marianne had been the atten-

dant of Rosabella from her childhood ; and haughty as the Princess naturally was, she was, like many other haughty people, completely the slave of her servant. Marianne was perfectly aware of her power, and she occasionally used it tyrannically : on the present occasion, however, she was really alarmed at the glowing cheeks, sparkling eyes, and agitated frame of Rosabella, and asked, with an appearance of deep interest, if she were ill.

“ In mind, though not in body,” replied Rosabella, throwing herself upon a sofa, and hiding her face in both her hands. “ Oh, Marianne ! what a wretch I am ! ”

“ What is the matter ? ” asked the *suivante*.

“ He loves her ! he adores her ! ” cried Rosabella, starting from her couch and traversing the room rapidly. “ Curses on her beauty ! O that a look of mine could wither it ! or that she could feel the burning fire that rages here ! ” Then stopping suddenly, she gazed upon her attendant with the wildness of a maniac, and, pressing her hand firmly against her side, threw herself again upon her couch,

exclaiming, "Oh, Marianne! why am I not beloved like Elvira?"

"And are you certain that she is beloved?"

"Certain!" reiterated Rosabella, wringing her hands; "Alas! alas! would I were not so certain; but can I doubt the evidence of my senses? This day—this very day! I saw Father Morris put a letter into her hands, which was inclosed in that addressed to Sir Ambrose. I saw a blush of conscious pleasure glow upon her cheeks as she perused it, and I could have stabbed her to the heart,—yes, and exulted in her dying agonies—triumphed in her groans. Oh, Marianne! is it not extraordinary that one so great, so noble, and so exalted as Edmund, can love such a poor, weak, feeble being as Elvira? But she loves him not; at least not as he should be loved. She is incapable of it."

"I wonder Father Morris gave her the letter."

"He could not help it, Marianne. It fell from its inclosure when Sir Ambrose tore it open; but she saw it fall. I even saw her eye

rest upon the address ; Father Morris merely picked it from the ground, and placed it in her hands."

" I thought he would not have given it to her voluntarily."

" No ; I think not. I believe the father is my friend, though I own sometimes it appears strange to me, Marianne, that he should seem to prefer my interest to that of every one else, when so many ties bind him to Sir Ambrose's family, and so few to me : nay, though I am often peevish and unreasonable with him, he never is offended, and appears to remain still as warmly attached to me as before :—I cannot account for it.

" He has ties that bind him to you that you know not of," said Marianne, in a low, under voice ; " he was your father's friend."

" Was he ?" cried Rosabella, eagerly ; " then perhaps he may enable me to clear off the shade that has so long hung upon my father's name. By heaven ! neither the gratification of my love nor of my revenge would give me half the pleasure."

“You had better not ask him,” said Marianne, in the same low, mysterious tone; “you can learn nothing upon that subject which it would give you pleasure to hear.” Then changing her voice, she added, “But what said Edric to the news of his brother’s glory?”

“I know not—I care not! Ice itself cannot be colder than Edric. When we met, and he offered his hand to greet me, his touch seemed to freeze my very veins. Cold, prudent, calculating, and cautious, he has all the vices of age without its excuses:—I hate him!”

“You do not then, I suppose, long for the moment when you are to become his bride?” asked the companion, with a sarcastic smile.

“Long for it, Marianne?” cried Rosabella, starting from her couch, and clasping her hands together with energy—“long for it! No; if all other resources fail, death shall free me before the hated moment arrives.” And as she spoke, Rosabella walked up and down the room, in a state of violent agitation.

“But your uncle?” resumed Marianne.

“My uncle!” repeated Rosabella, stopping

short, “ yes, yes ; my uncle is positive—and I—a poor dependant, and in his power. But even that shall not control my will. Poor and dependant as I am—I am free ; and sooner would I labour for my bread, sooner would I perish in the streets, or endure unheard of torments, than live in a palace surrounded by crowds of adoring slaves, if the price were that I must call Edric husband.”

Marianne, satisfied with the ease with which she found she could play upon the feelings of her mistress, now touched a chord that thrilled to softer emotions.

“ I can never believe,” said she, “ that a mind so noble as that of Edmund, can long remain in the thralldom of Elvira. When he comes to know her better, and to feel the feebleness of her soul, he must despise her.”

“ Ah ! do you think so ?” cried Rosabella eagerly. “ But you deceive yourself, Marianne ; Edmund is so blinded that he fancies her very faults perfections.”

“ But that blindness cannot last for ever, and when it wears off, disgust must ensue.”

“ Oh, Marianne, if it were so !” exclaimed Rosabella ; and, sitting down, she rested her elbows on her knees, and pressed her hands against her beating forehead, concealing her face and remaining apparently lost in meditation. Marianne did not disturb her. She was aware that she had given her active imagination a theme to work upon, and she left her to enjoy it ; tranquilly resuming her usual avocations without seeming to notice her abstraction.

Whilst this scene was passing in the apartment of Rosabella, Elvira was informing her confidant, Emma, who had been her governess and remained her companion, of the pleasure she had experienced from hearing of the success of Edmund, and from the tenderness of his letter. “ How I wish I could love him as he deserves,” said she, “ but, alas, I fear it is not in my nature. I can scarcely even comprehend what he thinks I ought to feel, and the violence of his manner terrifies me beyond expression. Is it not extraordinary, Emma, that this passion, which seems so universally extended throughout all nature, should be alone a stranger to my breast

—that I alone, should be debarred from feeling its influence? Edmund complains of my coldness; and I feel that he has reason to do so. I feel that his love is different from mine: I esteem and respect him; I have even a sincere friendship for him, and no one values his worth more than I; I should also be very sorry if any misfortune were to befall him; but this is all, and I do not think I am capable of feeling more for any one.”

“Indeed you deceive yourself,” replied Emma; “I am sure a heart so kind and affectionate as yours is capable of love. Do not marry Lord Edmund; I am certain you do not love him as you will love one day: and if a day should arrive, when you feel a real passion, what will be your horror at the recollection of the sacred ties which bind you to one who is indifferent to you. I shudder at the thought.”

“And so should I, Emma; but that it is impossible such an event can happen. If I were married to Edmund, I never could love another, even if my nature were susceptible of the passion: a fact I much doubt.”

Emma shook her head incredulously. "Oh!" sighed she; "how little do you know of love!"

"I know more of it than you imagine. In my opinion, people would never fall in love, if they had abundance of other thoughts to occupy their minds. They would marry, of course: but that, as every body knows, is quite a different thing."

"Then you disbelieve in love entirely?"

"Not entirely; but I think what is generally called love is the offspring of idleness. When people have nothing to do, particularly if they happen to have warm imaginations, they amuse themselves by picturing an idol of perfection. This they endow with all kinds of virtue probable and improbable; and they are enchanted with the fantasy, because it is their own creation. They soon find a face or figure that pleases them, and to this they attach the charms they had before given their imaginary idol—no matter whether they accord or not. When people are what is called in love, they are like persons in green spectacles, they see every thing of a colour that does not really belong to it. Mar-

riage, however, lifts up the magic veil, and displays the real faults and imperfections of each individual. The self-deluded mortals then find out their mistake, though too late ; and start back aghast at the appalling spectre that presents itself, crying out bitterly against deception ; whilst, in fact, they have been only deceiving themselves."

" You reason admirably ; but it is only from the head, not the heart. If you had ever felt, you would perceive the fallacy of your arguments."

" I think not ; for I am convinced the experience of ninety-nine persons out of a hundred would confirm what I say, if they could but be persuaded to avow their real sentiments. This, however, they are always, in such cases, very reluctant to do, as no one likes to own himself deceived."

" And do you think all love is like that you have been speaking of ?"

" Heaven forbid !—No—no, Emma, do not imagine I am such a heretic as to deny the existence of true love. I only think it is very difficult to be met with. That it does exist, I

firmly believe; but few, very few are the bosoms that are capable of feeling it."

"Now I agree with you perfectly. I thought you could not mean all you before asserted."

"Excuse me, Emma, I did mean what I said. But I did not then speak of real love; I spoke only of the passion, or rather fancy, that usurps its name. Real, pure, undefiled love is that absorbing affection that prefers another's happiness to its own; that devotion that would sink unknown to the grave, to procure another's happiness; that seeks not its own gratification, but would sacrifice all the world can give, to promote the welfare of another; that can taste of no pleasure and partake of no delight, unless it be participated by the beloved object, and even then, joys in his satisfaction more than in its own. This is what I call love. I can imagine such a passion, though I shall never feel it. However, that it *may* be felt I am firmly convinced; though even you must acknowledge, it is rare to find it.

"Alas! my dear mistress!" said Emma, sighing heavily. "Every word you utter, con-

vinces me you deceive yourself. For God's sake, do not marry Lord Edmund. You could have no idea of the romantic feelings you describe, if your heart were not open to receive them. Lord Edmund does not——”

“Hush ! hush, Emma !” exclaimed Elvira, playfully interrupting her. “It is of no use. Say what we will, like most people that argue, we are sure to remain of the same opinion when we have done. I don't believe anybody ever yet was convinced by words ; we must wait for facts, and, *en attendant*, suppose we consult upon what dress will be most becoming for us to wear at the approaching ceremony.

Emma gladly consented ; and the princess and her companion were soon involved in a maze of ribbons, crapes, gauzes, silks and satins, from which it would be quite in vain for me to attempt to extricate them.

When Edric next saw his father, after the partial explanation that had taken place between them, he was excessively surprised to find him behave exactly as usual. The youthful philosopher was rather disconcerted at this

conduct, which completely deranged all his speculations. In the course of his meditations in the grove, he had magnanimously made up his mind to endure every species of persecution rather than submit in the slightest degree to alter his opinions; and such is the strange and whimsical inconsistency of the human mind, that he was actually disappointed when he found there appeared little prospect of his heroic resolutions being called into practice.

It may seem strange to those who are feelingly convinced of the substantial comforts of an hospitable mansion and well supplied table, that any one should be found quixotic enough to lament that he had lost the chance of being deprived of them; but Edric's was the age of romance. His life had hitherto passed in one dull monotonous round, and the prospect of bustle and adventure has, in such cases, most irresistible charms. He also knew nothing of the world; and was almost as ignorant of the real evils of life, as the French princess, who, hearing that some persons had died of hunger, wondered at their folly, and said that for her

part, rather than be famished, she would eat bread and cheese. Thus, as we said before, Edric was rather chagrined than delighted, when his father greeted him the morning after their conference as affectionately as before, and very amicably proposed that as soon as breakfast was ended, they should take a walk together to the castle of the duke.

Unwilling to vex his father needlessly by refusing, and yet fearful of compromising his firmness, by appearing to accede to what might be treachery on the part of his opponents, our young philosopher gave a rather ungracious assent to this proposition, and remained apparently absorbed in meditation during the whole walk. They found the duke extremely busy. Like many other people who have few real affairs to occupy them, he was quite delighted with any thing that seemed to promise a little bustle, and was firmly resolved to make the most of it. He was then giving orders for an illumination, and a public dinner to his tenants; bell-ringing, speech-making, and a variety of other things, we have really

neither time nor patience to enumerate. Busy as he was, however, he was glad to see our friends, and greeted them most cordially.

“You are come in the very nick of time,” said he: “I was just upon the point of sending for you. Do you know, Sir Ambrose, it has struck me that this triumph of Edmund’s will be an admirable opportunity for his marriage; ay, and for yours too, Edric. What say you, Sir Ambrose?”

“Oh! of course I can have no objection.”

“And of course,” resumed the Duke, “I do not suppose the young men can have any. What do you say, Edric?”

But Edric did not speak: for, to own the truth, he did not exactly know what to say.

“Edric is so delighted, that it has deprived him of the power of utterance,” observed the baronet, rather maliciously, perceiving the duke grow impatient.

“I trust your grace will excuse me,” said Edric, at length recovering himself; “but——but——”

“But what?” said the duke, impatiently.

“I thought,” resumed Edric, with considerable hesitation, “that your grace did not intend that the princesses should marry—till—till they had passed the age that would render—that is to say, that does render them eligible candidates for the throne.—”

Edric did not express himself very clearly; as he was not altogether certain of what he was saying. The duke, however, heard enough to put him into a passion.

“So I did,” exclaimed he, “I know that perfectly; but I have altered my mind, I tell you: Claudia isn’t above thirty, and she’s likely to live these fifty years,—so it is of no use waiting for her death. Besides, I should like to see my children married before I die. I am getting old; and anxiety in these respects increases with declining years.”

“Then my anxiety ought to be greater than yours, duke, for I am the eldest,” said Sir Ambrose.

“By a couple of years, at least,” returned the duke, laughing, “for I suppose that is about the difference in our ages. But you

don't answer me, Edric. Do you think you have eloquence enough to persuade your mistress to relinquish the prospect of a throne in your behalf?"

"I would not wish her to make any sacrifice upon my account," replied Edric.

"Confound such coldness! why, when I was a young man, my heart would have beat like a pendulum in perpetual motion at such a proposition. Go to her, man! and try your fortune.—

‘She is a woman, therefore to be wooed;
She is a woman, therefore to be won;’

or rather what, perhaps, will be better, I will send for her here, and tell her my will. Egad! I have a mind to surprise Edmund, and let you grace his triumph as bride and bridegroom."

"Rosabella would never consent to such a proposition," exclaimed Edric, willing to postpone the dreaded explanation as long as possible.

"I think not," resumed the duke, "if you woo her with that face. "However, you need

not distress yourself, as you will have nothing to say till you get to the altar. I'll take all the rest upon myself, and I've a notion I shall prove the better suitor. I know women well, and how to manage them. I'll defy any woman in the world to have a will of her own whilst she is in my custody. I know how to quiet them and bring them round. You shall see how I will manage Rosabella. She won't have a word to say for herself. Here Augustus, tell the Princess Rosabella I wish to speak with her."

"Hold!" cried Edric, "I cannot allow you to send for the princess till I have first explained my real sentiments——"

"Nonsense!" said the duke. "However, I see there is no occasion to send for her; for yonder she comes. I will meet her and explain my sentiments, and then it will be quite time enough to talk about yours."

So saying, he broke from Edric, who attempted to detain him; and advanced to meet Rosabella.

"Good God!" exclaimed Edric, "what will

become of me ? this obstinate old man will tell her, I wish our union ; and for worlds, I would not mortify the proud spirit of Rosabella, by publicly declining her hand. What shall I do ? I must request a private interview, and throwing myself upon her mercy, persuade her to reject me."

" Then you still persist in your determination," said Sir Ambrose. " I had hoped my kindness in appearing to forget what passed yesterday, had disposed you to comply with my wishes. However, since you seem inclined to adhere to your resolution, you cannot be surprised that I should follow your example, and I can only repeat, that if you do not marry Rosabella, you know the alternative."

" I do," said Edric, firmly ; " and I am prepared to meet it."

In the mean time, the duke had met Rosabella, and had evidently begun to declare his wishes to her, for the colour had fled from her cheeks, and her eyes were cast upon the ground, whilst her strongly compressed lips, as she walked silently by his side, showed that it was with

infinite difficulty that she controlled her feelings sufficiently to hear him with patience.

“In short,” said the duke, as they drew near Sir Ambrose and his son, “I have fixed upon the day after to-morrow for your wedding, and, though I own the time is somewhat short to make preparations, you must be satisfied to have your wedding clothes after your marriage instead of before, which I should think need not make much difference. So now all you ’ll have to do, will be to tell your cousin; and the day after to-morrow your name will be Montagu.”

“And do you know of whom you are disposing so unceremoniously?” asked Rosabella, raising her brilliant eyes from the ground, and fixing them upon him with a look of proud scorn. The duke shrunk involuntarily from the withering glance, which seemed to fall upon him with the fabled power of that of the basilisk.

“Of whom I am disposing?” stammered he, unconsciously repeating her words, “Of whom I am disposing? Why, of my niece, to be

sure," he continued, arranging with difficulty his scattered ideas. "You are my niece, are you not?"

"Yes," returned Rosabella, "unfortunately *I am* your niece; and I blush for an uncle who does not scruple to abuse so barbarously the last legacy bequeathed to him by an unfortunate brother. Yes, my lord duke, I am your niece—your protégée—your dependant. I am not ashamed to own that I owe my daily bread to your bounty; but notwithstanding all this, I am not aware that I am your slave, nor do I think the pecuniary obligations I am under to you, sufficient to give you the right of disposing of me as an article of furniture, or a beast of burthen."

"You mistake the matter entirely, Rosabella," said the duke; "I do not wish to hurt your feelings."

"Do you think, then, that I am formed of stone or iron, that I am to be told to marry when and where you list, without having my inclinations consulted or my affections gained? Look

at the bridegroom for whom you destine me. Certainly I must be insensibility itself to resist such overwhelming ardour."

"You are right, Rosabella," replied the duke; "he is enough to provoke a stone. I admire your spirit; a woman should not unsought be won, and he, I own, looks as if he expected you to go down upon your knees, and beg him to accept of your hand."

"You are mistaken," returned Edric, now taunted into the necessity of avowing himself, in spite of his former resolutions; "it is not merely coldness that dictates my conduct. I should have explained myself before, had you permitted it, though I would willingly have spared the princess this public declaration. However, as I am now forced to avow my real sentiments, I openly and solemnly protest, that no torments shall ever force me to become the husband of Rosabella. I am sorry——"

"Spare your pity, Sir," said the princess, haughtily, and interrupting him—"I, at least, have no occasion for it; for know, that I too would sooner experience a thousand deaths than

become your wife. Nothing but the respect I owe my uncle has prevented my declaring my sentiments sooner."

"And only my affection for my father kept me silent."

"What a considerate pair! and how highly we ought to feel obliged to them!" said the duke, ironically. "And pray, if your respect and affection permit you to answer the question, what may it be your high will and pleasure to intend doing now?"

"Whatever you please," replied both Edric and Rosabella, almost at the same instant.

"Dear me! how amazingly condescending! So, as long as you are permitted to have your own way, we may have the honour of suggesting plans for your approbation whenever we please. How astonishingly kind! I am afraid we shall never be able to show ourselves properly grateful, Sir Ambrose."

"This irony, my lord," said Edric, firmly, "is unworthy both of yourself and us. I will allow that you and my father have both reason to be displeased with our conduct, as it has dis-

appointed hopes which you have long cherished ; but permit me to say, that if you had expressed your displeasure in serious, manly, and open terms as he did, it would have been much more befitting your high rank and the importance of the subject, than the taunting irony you have thought proper to make use of."

"Schooled too ! by St. Wellington !" exclaimed the duke. "Upon my word, these are fine times, when a man of my age and rank is to be lectured by a beardless stripling !"

"I did not mean to offend your grace," said Edric ; "and I am sorry the violence of my feelings compelled me to use language unbefitting my youth, and disrespectful to an old and valued friend of my father."

"Say no more, young man," replied the duke, "apologies only double an offence. If such are your sentiments, I would rather you declared than concealed them, as I think even insolence preferable to hypocrisy. However, after what has passed, I can never meet you amicably again, and I shall even avoid entering the house of my friend, Sir Ambrose, whilst you remain in it." This was

spoken with dignity, and a majestic firmness of tone. The duke's voice, however, trembled a little as he continued—"I shall be sorry to lose the society of my old friend, and I should be equally sorry to induce him to desert you, but I cannot willingly expose myself to insult ; and I must accordingly decline all farther intercourse with your family."

"Decline all farther intercourse with our family !" exclaimed Sir Ambrose. "This from you, duke ! And Edmund ! my darling Edmund ! is he to suffer for the faults of his brother ?"

"How do you know that the loss of my daughter would make him suffer ?" asked the duke, sneeringly. "Perhaps when the moment came for me to give her to him, he too would make a bow, and humbly asking my pardon, beg leave to decline the honour. Oh ! curse such politeness !"

"My dear duke, I would answer for Edmund with my life. He adores Elvira, and loves you as a father. You, too, have always *professed* to love him—"

"And so I do. Didn't I rejoice like an old

fool at his triumph? Didn't I determine to give my daughter, and bestow my estate upon him? And were not these proofs of love?"

"They were, they were! my dear friend! and, as he has never done any thing to offend you, why should not your favourable intentions continue? Why should you punish him on account of this ungrateful idiot, whom I renounce for ever."

"Oh, my father! my dear father!" exclaimed Edric; "do not say for ever!"

"Yes, for ever! I repeat," resumed Sir Ambrose. "Begone and let me never see you more. I told you yesterday my determination, and as you have chosen to incur the penalty, you must take the consequence. Come, my friend," continued he, taking the arm of the duke, "let us leave him to his own reflections. Thank God! we are none of us answerable for the faults of our children; and it would indeed be sad, if you and I were to break a friendship that has lasted half a century, on account of the childish folly of an inconsiderate boy!"

“It would, indeed,” returned the duke; “and it would have broken my heart to have quarrelled with my darling Edmund. Yet, it is hard, at my time of life, to be disappointed in one’s fondest hopes.”

And as he walked away with Sir Ambrose, the tears actually streamed down his cheeks. Both Edric and Rosabella were affected, but, wisely considering that they could say nothing likely to allay the storm, they remained silent till the old men had gradually disappeared.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Sir Ambrose and the duke thus withdrew, Edric and Rosabella were left alone together, and remained for some moments in perfect silence, for both felt keenly the awkwardness of their situation. After standing for some time looking as foolish as their enemies could reasonably desire, Edric bowed, and would have made good his retreat, but Rosabella stopped him.

“Let us be friends, Edric,” said she, smiling and holding out her hand, “though we are no longer lovers.”

Edric took the offered hand, and involuntarily pressed it to his lips. “Upon my word, you improve !” continued Rosabella gaily ; “I de-

clare I never saw such an instance of gallantry from you before, during the whole course of our courtship !”

Edric smiled as he replied, “ If you knew the burthen that has been taken from my mind by the explanation of this morning—”

“ Hush ! hush !” cried Rosabella laughing, “ Now you have spoiled all again. I was afraid your gallantry was too great to be lasting.”

“ I acknowledge,” replied Edric, joining in her mirth, “ that it is not very polite in me to rejoice in being freed from your chains : but I am no flatterer, and—and—”

“ A truce with apologies,” exclaimed Rosabella ; “ as my uncle very justly observed just now, they only make the matter worse. The case is simply this : you and I were not suited for each other ; we found it out, and we are both glad to be released from ties that we discovered were incompatible with our happiness. ‘ Can any thing be more clear ?’ as Dr. Entwerfen says. You, I presume, are going to travel, and to gratify your natural love of variety and wish to acquire information ; whilst I, poor unfortunate

damsel that I am, must remain at home and wear the willow, till I am fortunate enough to meet with a swain who has the penetration to discover my charms."

"And most ardently do I hope that it may soon be the case!" said Edric, astonished at her affability, and feeling more kindly disposed towards her than he had ever done before. "You are right in supposing I wish to travel; but, alas! I have not now the power. My father is too much offended to afford me the means; and without money—"

"Travelling is far from agreeable," interrupted Rosabella, smiling: "is not that what you would say? Why not apply to Father Morris, then; he can, and I am sure, will help you. For myself, I am powerless, except as far as giving advice."

"Your advice, however, is excellent," replied Edric, regarding her with still encreasing amazement; "and I assure you I will follow it to the letter. I never thought of applying to the reverend father, though I now feel it is the best thing I can do."

“ Why then do you look at me so incredulously ?” continued Rosabella ; “ I can have no motive for deceiving you ; and yet you look as suspicious as though you thought I had. I own my behaviour towards you is changed ; but remember the different circumstances in which I am now placed. Formerly I feared even to speak to you, lest my words should be deemed an encouragement of the pretensions I supposed you to entertain to my hand. Now that we are both free, that reason no longer exists ; and besides, I feel grateful to you for declaring your sentiments so openly, and thus saving me from my uncle’s displeasure. ‘ Can any thing be more simple ?’ as your friend Dr. Entwerfen would say.”

Notwithstanding Rosabella’s apparent openness, however, and the plausible reasons she gave for her conduct, Edric could not divest himself of the idea that she wished to get him out of the kingdom as speedily as possible, for some other motives than those she thought proper to avow. There likewise appeared some mystery in her speaking so confidently of the assistance of

Father Morris ; for as the duke's family had a regular confessor, Father Murphy, it seemed strange that Rosabella should have an intercourse with any other priest, beyond that required by the common forms of society ; and so slight an intimacy could scarcely warrant the positive assertion she had made use of. Edric, however, was too anxious to avail himself of any opportunity that offered of proceeding to Egypt, to trouble himself with long investigation of the subject ; and when he quitted Rosabella, he proceeded in search of Father Morris as a matter of course, and almost without any volition of his own.

The suite of rooms appropriated to Father Morris in the mansion of Sir Ambrose was in a wing partly detached from the main dwelling ; and thither Edric bent his steps. As he approached, however, to his great surprise he heard a sound of blows followed by deep groans. Knowing that it was the hour of dinner for the domestics, and that none of the other inmates of the mansion were at home but the friar and himself, he could not at first account for this strange

and fearful noise ; but finding, as he advanced, the sounds proceeded from the inner chamber of the priest, where no one but himself ever ventured, he soon became satisfied that Father Morris was performing a penance of self-flagellation; and as it was deemed impious to interrupt a penitence, he seated himself quietly in the outer chamber, waiting the priest's leisure ; wondering, however, to himself, what crime so holy a man could possibly have committed, that could require so severe an expiation.

When Father Morris made his appearance, it was with his usual downcast eyes and composed look. He expressed his astonishment at seeing Edric, but made no allusion to the penance he had just been performing, and listened with a cold unmoved aspect to Edric's communication.

“ Then I am to understand,” said he, when it was finished, “ that you are like the prince we were reading of the other day, in a book we found in your tutor's library. You cannot be happy because you have never been miserable ; and you are going to plunge into all the cares

and troubles of the world, merely to learn how to enjoy retirement."

"Not exactly so, father;" rejoined Edric; "I have two other motives, — the anger of my father, and the earnest tormenting wish I before confessed to you, of diving into the secrets of the grave."

"And how is that to be accomplished by your leaving England?"

"I wish to try to resuscitate a mummy."

"The scheme is wild, vague, and impracticable."

"Not if Dr. Entwerfen's hypothesis be true. For, supposing the souls of the ancient Egyptians to be chained to their bodies, and to be remaining in them in a torpid state,—it is very possible that by employing so powerful an agent as galvanism, re-animation may be produced. I have already seen some wonderful instances of the vivifying power of the machine; and as the Egyptians took care to preserve the bodies of their dead quite entire, probably from the idea I have just alluded to,—I think the mummies are the best subjects we can possibly fix upon for our experiments."

“The ancient Egyptians did not imagine the souls of their dead remained in the bodies, but that they would return to them after the expiration of a certain number of years ; so that your hypothesis, as far as it rests upon their opinions, falls to the ground.”

“Do not call it my hypothesis,” returned Edric, “it is that of Dr. Entwerfen ; my own opinion is decidedly different—for I cannot imagine any idea of death that does not imply a separation between the body and soul. The subject, however, is curious ; to me highly interesting ; and I own, candidly, there are many mysteries connected with it, which it would give me the highest satisfaction to have explained.”

“And these mysteries, which have vainly excited the speculation of the learned since the commencement of the world, you think your journey to Egypt will enable you to unravel,” said Father Morris, with a sardonic sneer. Edric felt irritated at his manner, and replied warmly :—

“I am not presumptuous, father ; but as

even you must allow, man is often but a blind instrument in the hands of fate, it is possible that the racking desire I feel to explore these mysteries may be an impulse from a superior power, and a proof that I am destined to be the mortal agent of their revelation to man. Egypt is a country rich in monuments of antiquity; and all historians unite in declaring her ancient inhabitants to have possessed knowledge and science far beyond even the boasted improvements of modern times. For instance, could we attempt to erect stupendous buildings like the pyramids, where enormous masses are arranged with geometrical accuracy, and the labours of man have emulated the everlasting durability of nature? Are we even capable of conceiving works so majestic as those they put in execution? No; assuredly not. In every point they surpassed us."

"Even in their religion?" asked Father Morris sarcastically.

"No," returned Edric; "every scheme of religion falls infinitely below the divine perfec-

tion of Christianity ; but as Christianity was not in the times we are speaking of, revealed, it cannot be denied that the Egyptians made some approach to wisdom even in their devotions. They worshipped Nature, though they diguised her under the symbols of her attributes, and gratified the vulgar taste by giving them tangible objects to represent ideas too sublime for their unenlightened comprehension. That they entertained the divine idea of a resurrection, and of rewards and punishments in a future life, is evident, not only from their favourite fable of the Phoenix, and the use they made of the now hackneyed image of the Butterfly ; but by the care they bestowed upon the preservation of the body ; their mournings for the loss of Osiris, and rejoicings when he was found ; and the kind of trial to which they subjected the human corpse after death, when, if serious crimes were alleged, and proved against it, it was denied the rites of sepulture, and left to rot, unlamented. Then, can any modern institutions excel the wisdom of the laws enacted by the Pharoahs ? or can any modern magnificence

equal that displayed in the cities of Memphis and Thebes? And since this will hardly be disputed, what country can be more fitting than that once so highly favoured, to be the scene of the most important discovery ever made by Man? Deride me if you will; I feel a superior power inspires my wishes. I feel irresistibly impelled forward. I feel called upon to act by a force far superior to my own, and I will obey its dictates. You smile, and secretly ridicule my projects; but remember that excessive incredulity sometimes savours as strongly of folly as credulity itself, and that both are alike injurious to the progress of science."

"I do not doubt it," said Father Morris, with provoking coldness; "though it must certainly be allowed not to be the prevailing foible of the present day. However, without staying to discuss that point at present, I humbly suggest, that, as I happen unfortunately to be rather pressed for time, it may be as well to condescend to bestow a few minutes' attention upon the best human means of enabling you to fulfil the high destinies

that await you in Egypt—as, notwithstanding the imperious nature of the impulse that invites you there, I presume you are aware that the vulgar agency of money will be necessary, as well as the scientific one of galvanism.”

The feelings of Edric were too highly wrought to bear this irony; and, snatching up his hat, he rushed out of the room, casting a look of indignation at the priest, who vainly endeavoured to stop him. Maddened by the conflicting emotions that struggled in his bosom, and disgusted alike with himself, Father Morris, and all the world, Edric hurried on, totally unaware which way he was going, till his career was stopped by his coming suddenly and violently in contact with another person, who was running equally heedlessly with himself, but in an opposite direction. Both recoiled some paces from the shock, and Edric found, to his surprise, it was Abelard whom he had greeted so unceremoniously. Curiosity to know what could have occasioned the abstraction of the worthy butler, (he being generally remark-

able for his peculiar attention to matters of ceremony,) diverted the thoughts of Edric from himself, and he, for the moment, forgot his own woes, whilst he inquired into those of Abelard.

“Alas ! alas !” said the old man, shaking his grey head, whilst the tears streamed in torrents down his wrinkled cheeks, “that I should ever have lived to see this day ! Oh, Master Edric ! how could you irritate your respectable progenitor ? Alas ! alas ! I feel my lachrymal gland suffused almost to overflowing, whenever the recollection of what has passed shoots across my piamater.”

“For Heaven’s sake ! tell me what is the matter !”

“Oh dear ! oh dear !” sobbed the unhappy butler, “that such longevity should have been granted me only that I might see so promising a young gentleman turned out of doors.”

“Tell me the worst ; though, indeed, I now fear I comprehend your meaning but too well.”

“Sir Ambrose commands that you depart immediately, and never enter again into the mansion of your paternal ancestors.”

“What will become of me!” exclaimed Edric, clasping his hands together, and raising his eyes to Heaven; then, after a short pause, he added more composedly, “Well, come what will, I am resigned. Fate urges me onward with irresistible violence, and I feel it would be in vain to attempt to combat against her dictates. I, at least, am prepared to execute her will.”

“But where will you go?” sobbed Abelard. “You will want money and friends. Alas! alas! that I should ever see the son of my old master stand in need of pecuniary assistance!”

“He but repeats the words of Father Morris,” said Edric; “and yet how differently his doubts affect me. The irony of the priest drove me to despair, but the grief of this old man soothes my wounded spirit. He surely loves me.”

These words were uttered in so faint a key, that the name of Father Morris only caught the ear of Abelard, and he replied:

“I don’t like Father Morris, and I never did; though it is now twenty years since he first entered the family, and though I have

never seen any thing in him to censure particularly, throughout the entire of that long period, yet my aversion remains undiminished. I suppose it must be a natural antipathy, and that the pores of my body don't assimilate in shape with the atoms that emanate from his."

"He drove me almost to madness," said Edric.

"I am not surprised at that," returned Abelard; "for I know he can take a fiendlike pleasure in tormenting. He can employ the most provoking, tantalizing expressions, and yet preserve the same soft, smooth voice, and keep his palebræ half closed, and his visual organs fixed upon the ground. Indeed, I never saw the iris of his eyes dilated in my life; and then he has such a manner of raising his supercilia, curving his nose, and drawing down his depressor anguli oris when he listens to any one or replies to them, as to give the expression of a perpetual sneer to his saturnine countenance."

Edric's own recent personal experience bore

testimony only too forcibly to the justice of those remarks; and as the wounded man shrinks from the slightest touch, so did Edric find the words of Abelard jar upon his nerves; as turning away from him to hide his emotions, he encountered the earnest gaze of Father Morris himself.

“Why do you appear astonished?” said the priest, smiling. “You are an infant, Edric; you quarrel with your best friends, and then appear surprised that you do not find them as capricious as yourself. You fancy you are very angry with me, for instance, and yet I am not conscious of having done any thing to offend you. Was it a crime to attempt to moderate an enthusiasm that I feared might mislead you? was it a fault to warn you against the dangers of a world of which as yet you know so little? No, no; I am confident your own reason and excellent good sense will acquit me, if you will but suffer them to act. Your imagination is too vivid, Edric; it sweeps away all before it, like a torrent. If you would view things calmly, you would perceive your folly. The world

will teach you wisdom. Go then, travel; experience personal privations and evils of every description, that you may learn to enjoy the pleasures that even now lie within your grasp, but which you spurn from you with contempt. So true it is that we never learn the real value of any blessing till we have experienced the misery that attends its privation."

"If this be the case," replied Edric, soothed in spite of himself, by the insinuating manner of the monk, "why should my feelings be an exception to the general rule? And since all our pleasures acquire a new zest by the force of contrast, and mine have long since lost all relish, is it not even wisdom to try the effect of change?"

"And yet it seems a folly," said Father Morris, in his smooth, plausible, hypocritical voice, with his eyes again fixed upon the ground, "to incur a certain evil in the hope of attaining an uncertain good."

Edric started, and fixed his eyes upon him, with an expression the monk well understood; and, not wishing again to provoke him past en-

duration, he continued in a different tone : “ But it is useless for age to preach lessons of prudence to youth, and as your father says, every one must purchase his own experience ; so we will now, if you please, change the subject to that of making preparations for your journey. You are still determined to visit Egypt, I suppose ? ”

“ It is my most ardent wish.”

“ Return then to your own apartment, and by to-morrow all shall be ready for your departure.”

“ He must not enter the house ! ” said Abelard ; “ alas ! alas ! that I should live to say it ! Sir Ambrose has forbidden him even to cross the threshold.”

“ Can you not remain concealed in the apartment of Dr. Entwerfen ? ” asked Father Morris, after a short pause ; “ no one enters there but himself ; and one of the windows looks upon this terrace, so that you may reach it unobserved ; Abelard, I am confident, will not betray you ; and I will accompany you, as I wish to consult with the doctor respecting your intended voyage.”

Edric hastily assented, and bidding Abelard an affectionate adieu, he and Father Morris easily climbed through the window that led to the adytum of Dr. Entwerfen, whilst Abelard, clasping his hands together, exclaimed as he retired, "God bless him ! Well, he shall not want for pecuniary assistance at any rate, if Mr. Davis and I can help it ; that is one comfort."

When Edric and Father Morris entered the study of Dr. Entwerfen, they found him engaged in what, certainly considering his age and station, seemed a very extraordinary amusement. He was apparently dancing a hornpipe, drawing his heels together, and alternately rising and sinking like a clown in a pantomime, twisting his face, in the mean time, into the most hideous grimaces.

"What is the matter ?" cried Edric and Father Morris, both at the same instant, gazing at him with surprise.

"I—I—I am galvanized," cried the doctor, in a piteous tone ; nodding his head with a sudden jerk, that seemed to threaten every instant to throw it out of its socket ; and then, suddenly

starting, he kicked out one leg horizontally, and twirled round upon the other with an air of an opera dancer.

“How did it happen?” cried Edric, excessively shocked at the unnatural contrast exhibited between the doctor’s serious countenance, and involuntary antics.

“I can’t—exactly—tell,” replied the doctor, bolting forth his words with difficulty, and still swimming, grinning, and capering, to the inexpressible horror of his companions, till by degrees his grimaces subsided, and he was enabled at last to stand tolerably steady. He now informed his friends, that trying some experiments with his galvanic battery, he had unfortunately operated upon himself; and in his turn listened to their account of what had passed between Edric and Sir Ambrose. Instead of expressing sorrow, however, when he found his pupil had quarrelled with his father, the doctor’s eyes sparkled with joy—“Then you must inevitably travel,” exclaimed he. “We shall visit the pyramids, we shall animate the mummies, and we shall attain immortality.”

There was something in this violent expression of the doctor's transports that did not quite harmonize with Edric's feelings, especially as he fancied he perceived a satirical smile lurking round the lips of Father Morris."

"When shall you be ready to set off?" asked he abruptly.

"To-morrow, if you will," replied the doctor. "I have foreseen this result some time, and I have been preparing every thing accordingly. I never knew a young Englishman in my life, Father Morris, who was not fond of travelling. The inhabitants of other countries travel for what they can get, or what they hope to learn; but an Englishman travels because he does not know what to do with himself. He spares neither time, trouble, nor money; he goes every where, sees every thing; after which, he returns—just as wise as when he set out. Not that I blame curiosity—no—I admire it above all things!—it is that which has led to all the great discoveries that have been made since the creation of the world, and

it is that which now impels us to explore the pyramids."

Edric looked excessively annoyed at the conclusion of this speech, and, to change the subject, hastily asked the doctor, if he thought his galvanic battery powerful enough for the experiment they meant to try with it.

"Powerful !" exclaimed the doctor ; " why I feel it even now tingling to my fingers' ends. I should think, Sir, the effect it has had upon me is a sufficient proof of the force of the machine."

"Undoubtedly !" replied Father Morris ; " nay, if we are to judge by that, I only tremble lest you should animate the pyramids as well as the mummies, and you must allow it would be an awkward sight to see them come tumbling and slipping along the plain."

"Sir !" said the doctor, staring at him.

"Do you intend visiting any other country than Egypt ?" asked Father Morris, fearful he had gone too far, and wishing, for reasons he did not openly avow, not to offend his companions.

“ I should like to see India,” said the doctor ; “ some black-letter pamphlets in my possession, allude to its being once governed by an old woman ; and as the regular historians make no mention of the fact, I should like to see what traditions I could gather respecting it on the spot. The religion of the ancient Hindoos, before they were converted to Christianity, has been said to have resembled that of the ancient Egyptians ; by comparing the monuments of both, one might be made to illustrate the other. I should also like, before we quit Africa, to see the celebrated court of Timbuctoo. I have long been in correspondence with a learned pundit there, who has communicated to me some of the most sublime discoveries.”

“ The whole of the interior of Africa must be interesting,” observed Father Morris, “ particularly the rising states on the banks of the Niger. It is generally instructive as well as amusing to watch the birth and struggles of infant republics ; and to remark first how fast the people encroach, and then the governors. Whilst the rulers are weak, they are always

liberal; but their exalted sentiments in general decrease in exact proportion as they become powerful."

"In short," resumed the doctor, "I would willingly traverse the whole world; I know but one country that I should dislike to visit."

"And which is that?" asked Edric.

"America," replied the doctor. "I have no wish to have my throat cut, or my breath stopped by a bowstring. I have a perfect horror of despotic governments."

"Then how do you endure the one we live under?" asked Father Morris.

"The case is quite different," returned the doctor. "With us, the spur of despotism is scarcely felt; and the people, being permitted occasionally to think and act for themselves, are not debased and brutalized as the slaves of absolute power are in general. Despotism, with us, is like a rod which the schoolmaster keeps hung up in sight of his boys, but which he has very seldom any occasion to make use of. From such despotism as that of the Americans, however, Heaven defend us!"

“Amen!” said Edric; “for, as we are happy now, we should be idiots to desire a change.”

“What an unphilosophical sentiment!” exclaimed the doctor: “I am really quite shocked that you, Edric, should utter such a speech. What an abominable doctrine! Remember, that if you once allow innovation to be dangerous, you instantly put a stop to all improvement—you absolutely shut and bolt your doors against it. Oh! it is horrible, that such a doctrine should be ever broached in a civilized country. You could not surely be aware of what you were saying?”

“To-morrow,” said Father Morris, addressing Edric, and without noticing the indignation of the learned doctor, “you must proceed to town, where you can remain at the house of a friend of mine, till you are ready for your voyage to Egypt. I would not, however, advise you to stay long before you go there; for, as your father intends visiting London in a day or two, you might meet, and the consequences be unpleasant. I have already dispatched a carrier-pigeon to advise my friend, Lord Gus-

tavus De Montfort, of your arrival; he, I am sure, will give you a hearty welcome, and not only afford you the shelter of his house, but afford you all the assistance in his power, to enable you to make preparations for your journey; for which purpose, also, I will take care to supply you with money. No thanks," continued he, stopping Edric, who was about to speak, "I detest them. If you really feel obliged to me, you will prove it by remaining silent. I must leave you now, as my longer absence might create suspicion. Adieu! God bless you! A balloon will wait for you to-morrow morning, at the corner of the wood. The doctor will, of course, accompany you. I think you may safely rest here concealed till then. Once more, adieu!"

"Now Father Morris is gone," said Doctor Entwerfen to his pupil, "I have a treat for you. I will show you a curious collection of ballads, all of which are at least three hundred years old, which a friend of mine picked up in London for me the other day, and sent me down this morning by the stage-balloon. They

are all of the genuine rag paper, a certain proof of their antiquity ; for, you know, the asbestos paper we now use has not been invented more than two hundred years. But you shall see them : follow me."

So saying, the doctor trotted off to his library, that paradise of half-forgotten volumes, most of which had been accidentally saved from their well-merited destination of covering over butter, and wrapping up cheese, to be drawn from the dust and obscurity in which they had lain for centuries, to ornament the shelves of Doctor Entwerfen ; and whose authors, if they could have taken a peep upon earth, and beheld them, would have been quite astonished to find themselves immortal. Entering this emporium of neglected learning, the doctor hastily advanced to a table, on which lay his newly acquired treasures, and holding them up, exclaimed, "Look, Edric, how beautifully dirty the paper is ; no art could counterfeit this dingy hue. This sooty tinge is the genuine tint of antiquity. You know, Edric, in ancient times, the caloric employed in culinary pur-

poses, and indeed for all the common usages of life, was produced by the combustion of wood, and of a black bituminous substance, or amphi-lites, drawn from the bowels of the earth, called coal, of which you may yet see specimens in the cabinets of the curious. As these substances decomposed, or rather expanded, by the force of heat, the attraction of cohesion was dissolved, and the component parts flew off in the shape of smoke or soot. This smoke, rising into the air, was dispersed by it, and the minute particles, or atoms, of which it was composed, falling and resting upon every thing that chanced to be in their way, produced that incomparable dusky hue, which the moderns have so often tried, though in vain, to imitate. I beg your pardon, Edric, for using such vulgar language to express what I wished to say, but really, treating upon such a subject, I did not know how to explain myself elegantly."

" Oh ! I understood you very well, Sir. After all, the only true use of language is to convey the ideas of one person to the understanding of another ; and, provided that end be at-

tained, I really do not see that it is of any consequence what words we make use of."

"True, Edric dear! you make very just observations sometimes. Well, but the ballads; I was going to show you my treasures,—my jewels! as the Roman lady said of her children. Look what beautiful specimens these are! A little torn here and there, and with a few of the lines illegible—but genuine antiques. I'll warrant every one of them above three hundred years old. Look, it is real linen paper; you may tell it by the texture; and then the spelling, see what a number of letters they put into their words that were of no use. Look at the titles of them. Here is the 'Tragical end of poor Miss Bailey'—and here 'Cherry Ripe'—and 'I've been roaming.' Here is 'The loves of Captain Wattle and Miss Roe'—and here are 'Jessy the flower of Dumblane,' and 'Dunois the brave.' But this is my Phoenix—here is what will be the envy of collectors! here is my invaluable treasure. This, I believe, is absolutely unique, and that I am so blest as to possess the only copy extant. The date is wanting,

but the manners it describes are so unpolished, that I should almost think it might be traced back to the times of the aboriginal Britons.— Thus it begins :—

At Wednesbury there was a cocking,
A match between Newton and Scroggins ;
The nailors and colliers left work,
And to Spittle's they all went jogging.
Tol de rol lol.'

I used to be very much puzzled at this burthen, which is one of frequent recurrence in ancient songs. At first, I thought it a relic of some language now irrevocably lost. Then it struck me, it might be an invocation to the deities of the aborigines. In short, I was quite perplexed, and knew not what to think, when a learned friend of mine hit upon an idea the other day, which seems completely to solve the difficulty. He suggests that it was an ancient manner of running up and down the scale ; and that 'Tol de rol lol' had the same signification as 'Do re mi fa ;'—which solution is at once so simple and ingenious, that I am

sure you, as well as myself, must be struck by it. I here omit a few stanzas, in which the author enumerates his heroes exactly in the Homeric manner. The names are so barbarous, that I am afraid of loosening my teeth in pronouncing them : —

‘ There was plenty of beef at the dinner,
Of a bull that was baited to death ;
Bunny Hyde got a lump in his throat,
Which had like to have stopt his breath.’

What a beautiful simplicity there is in that last line,

‘ Which had like to have stopt his breath.’

Oh, we moderns have nothing equal to it !—

‘ The company fell in confusion,
To see this poor Bunny Hyde choke,
So they hurried him down to the kitchen,
And held his head over the smoke.’

This developes a curious practice of antiquity. You know, Edric, I explained to you just

now the manner in which combustion was formerly effected, and the causes of the production of what was called smoke. I own, however, it seems a strange way of reviving a half-suffocated man, to hold his head over smoke, which, being loaded, as I said before, with innumerable atoms of all sorts and sizes, would, one might think, be more likely to impede respiration than restore it. The fact, however, is undoubted; and it not only affords a curious illustration of the manner of the ancients, but is of itself a strong proof of the authenticity of the ballad; for such an idea never could have entered the head of a modern. To return to poor Hyde—

‘ One gave him a kick o’ th’ stomach,
And another a thump o’ th’ brow,
His wife cried throw him i’ th’ stable,
And he will be better just now.’

This unfeeling conduct of his wife does not say much in commendation of the ladies of those times. Here follows an hiatus of several stanzas: I find, however, by a word or two here and there, that they celebrated the exploits of two gallic heroes:—

‘ The best i’ th’ country bred ;
The one was a brassy-wing black,
And the other a dusky-wing’d red.’

These unfortunate victims of the cruelty of man seem both to have perished. There is a stanza, however, before this catastrophe, which seems to relate to the combat.

‘ The conflict was hard upon each,
Till glossy-wing’d blacky was choked,
The colliers were nationally vex’d,
And the nailers were all provoked.’

This passage seems very obscure : ‘ Nationally’ is evidently a sign of comparison, but I cannot say I ever saw it employed before. It is, however, another proof of the amazing antiquity of the ballad. After this, it appears that the people broke in upon the ring, and both cocks were crushed to atoms. I don’t know whether you are acquainted with the manner in which these gallic combats were conducted, Edric. A kind of amphitheatre was formed, upon which the birds were pitted one against the other, whence the name cock-pit. The combatants were armed with large iron spurs, and

the victor generally left his rival dead upon the field. The ballad proceeds:—

‘ The cock-pit was near to the church,
As an ornament to the town ;
One side was an old coal-pit,
And the other was well gorsed round.’

Gorse was a kind of heath or furze.

‘ Peter Hadley peep’d through the gorse,
In order to see the cocks fight ;
Spittle jobb’d his eye out with a fork,
And said, ‘ Blast you, it sarves you right.

This is very spirited and expressive, though the false quantities render it difficult to read.

‘ Some folks may think this is strange,
Who Wednesbury never knew,
But those who have ever been there,
Won’t have the least doubt but it’s true.

For they are all savage by nature,
And guilty of deeds that are shocking,
Jack Baker he whack’d his own feyther,
And so ended the Wednesbury cocking.’ ”

“ It is very fine certainly,” said Edric,
who was half asleep.

“Upon my word,” returned the doctor, “I don’t think you have heard a single word I have been saying.”

“Oh! yes, I have,” replied Edric, “every syllable. It was about a man killing his own father, and putting his eyes out with a fork.”

“Eh?” cried the doctor, somewhat annoyed at this unequivocal proof that though his words might have struck upon the auricular organs of his pupil, they had not reached his brains. The exclamation of the doctor restored Edric to his senses, and he began to apologize.

“I am really very sorry,” said he, “but you must excuse my inattention. Sometimes, you know, the mind is not in tune for literary discussions, even when proceeding from the most eloquent lips. This is my case at the present moment. My mind is so occupied by the important change that has just taken place in my affairs, that, I own, even your learning and eloquence were thrown away upon me.”

“If that be the state of your mind,” replied the doctor, with chagrin, “it is of no use to show you any more of my literary treasures;

else I have some of matchless excellence. Here is a letter addressed to Sheridan, a witty writer of comedies, in the eighteenth century, which has never been opened,—and here is a tailor's bill of the immortal Byron, which may possibly never have been looked at. But here is the most inestimable of my relics. Look, at least, at this. This piece of paper, covered carelessly with irregular strokes and lines, was once in the possession of that enchanting, that inimitable novelist of the nineteenth century, generally distinguished in the works of contemporary writers by the mysterious title of "The Great Unknown!" See, here is half the word 'Waverley,' written upon it, and doubtless all these other irregular marks and scratches proceeded directly from his pen. I confess, Edric, I never contemplate this relic of genius without a feeling of reverence, and almost of awe. 'Perhaps,' say I to myself, when I look at it, 'when these letters were formed, the first idea had but just arisen in the mind of the author of those immortal works, which were afterwards destined to improve and delight mankind. Per-

haps, at that very moment gigantic thoughts were rushing through his brain, and a variety of new ideas opening their treasures to his imagination.' Oh, there is something in the mere random stroke of the pen of a celebrated character, inexpressibly affecting to the mind ;—it carries one back to the very time when he lived—it seems to make one acquainted with him, and to let us into the secrets of his inmost thoughts. But I see you are not attending to me, Edric !”

“ I am very sorry—another time I should be happy—but now—I cannot. However, when we return, perhaps—”

“ It may be then too late,” said the doctor, with solemnity ; and locking up his cabinet, he led the way back to his common sitting-room, in high dudgeon.

CHAPTER VII.

THE morning after the events just recorded, as Mr. Montagu, the brother of Sir Ambrose, was sitting at the breakfast-table with his wife and daughter, they were all startled by the unexpected arrival of a letter from Sir Ambrose. "Bless me!" cried Mr. Montagu, moved for once to forget his usual habits of indifference—"I do believe it is a letter from my brother."

"Your brother!" screamed Mrs. Montagu, starting up to examine it, and in her agitation overturning a patent steam coffee-machine, by which coffee was roasted, ground, made, and poured out with an *ad libitum* of boiling milk and sugar, all in the short space of five mi-

notes. "Oh!" continued she—"I am scalded to death!"

"I hope not, my dear," said Mr. Montagu, calmly taking up his letter, and carefully examining it on all sides without opening it. "Yes," continued he, "it is indeed from my brother, and I hope it contains no ill news, for I do not perceive any signs of mourning about it." And so saying, he very tranquilly laid his letter again upon the table, and recommenced sipping his coffee.

"La! papa, hadn't you better open your letter and read it?" asked Clara, who was busily employed in assisting her mother.

"Ah!" resumed Mr. Montagu. "True! I never thought of that—I think I had." Then again taking the letter in his hand, he broke the seal and gave it to Clara to read.

"And do you think my daughter is to leave me when I am in this miserable condition, Mr. Montagu, to read letters from your brother, Mr. Montagu—a man who has always treated me with such disrespect, Mr. Montagu,—and I half scalded to death!"

“ I am sure I’m very sorry, my dear,” began Mr. Montagu.

“ Oh, spare your sorrow,” exclaimed his wife—“ for I’m sure you don’t care one single straw about me. You’re a cruel man—”

“ Hadn’t I better read the letter ?” asked Clara, trembling at the thought of the domestic sparring she saw about to ensue.

“ Yes, yes ! read, my dear,” said her father, glad of any pretext to avert the coming storm : for though he seldom disturbed himself about any thing, provided his study was not swept oftener than once a month, and he was not obliged to submit to the insupportable fatigue of arranging his ideas in the tense form, necessary for conversation ; he had yet a most inconceivable horror of his wife’s fluency of tongue, thus affording a striking proof of the ingratitude of mortals, who often ungraciously find fault with the very things for which they have most occasion to be thankful ; as it must be allowed that nothing could really be more convenient for a man of a taciturn disposition, than to have a wife who could manage to talk at once for him and herself too.

Notwithstanding the encouragement of her father, Clara, however, still paused, looking with a timid eye towards her mother, for that lady's permission to begin. Curiosity struggled powerfully with anger in the breast of Mrs. Montagu for some minutes; but at last the former prevailed, and with a nod she permitted Clara to read. She immediately began as follows:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER.”

“Humph,” observed Mrs. Montagu, “his last letter began—*Sir*. He's getting wonderfully civil, I think.”

“Pshaw!” exclaimed her husband.

Clara continued,—“I am happy to inform you, that my dear Edmund has gained a glorious victory.”

“And what is that to us, I should like to know?” said Mrs. Montagu: “for my part, I have too much pride to trouble myself about people, who don't trouble themselves about me.”

Clara went on.—“ We are all coming up to London, to be present at a grand triumph the Queen is going to give him ; and thinking it a pity there should be a misunderstanding——”

“ Ah ! what’s that, child ?” exclaimed Mr. Montagu, laying down a problem which he had been studying ever since she began.—“ Read that again, Clara.”——

“ And thinking it a pity there should be a misunderstanding any longer existing between you and me, we being both fast approaching to the grave, I intend, with your and Mrs. Montagu’s permission——”

“ Mrs. Montagu’s permission !” cried the delighted Mrs. Montagu ; “ are you quite sure he says that, Clara ?” and she pressed over her daughter’s shoulder to ascertain the joyful fact. “ Well, well, I do declare he really does say so. Look, my dear, there it is,—‘ Mrs. Montagu’s permission.’ He never called me Mrs. Montagu before. God bless him ! a nice old gentleman ! I am sure I shall be very glad to see him and his brave son, too. Only think,

my dear ! what an honour it is to have a hero in one's family ! Read on, Clara ; I feel quite interested to know all the particulars of my nephew's victory. You know, he is my nephew, Mr. Montagu, as well as yours, as I am your wife, and he is your own brother's son ; so, read on, Clara, and let us know all about him."

Clara obeyed the moment her mother gave her an opportunity. " I intend, with your and Mrs. Montagu's permission, to take the opportunity of visiting you. I remain, with kind remembrances to Mrs. Montagu and my niece, to whom I long to be introduced, your affectionate brother,

" AMBROSE MONTAGU."

" Very well," said Mr. Montagu, " I shall be very glad to see him ; I always loved my brother, and I was quite sorry when we were not friends."

" Here is a postscript," resumed Clara, and she read :

" I quite forgot to inform you, that the Queen has conferred a title upon my son, and that

I shall have to present him to you as Lord Edmund."

"I am very glad to hear it," exclaimed the gratified uncle.

"And so am I," reiterated his wife. "My nephew, Lord Edmund Montagu. I wonder when they will be here: I must set about making preparations for them immediately. Strike the kitchen automaton, Clara, to summon all the domestic assistants together, that I may give my orders. Dear me! what a bustle I am in."

In one corner of the room stood a kind of organ, by playing certain notes upon which, intimation was given in the lower regions of what was wanted in the parlour; the organ having long tubes communicating with the kitchen, through which the sound was conveyed. Clara accordingly sat down, and by striking a few chords, soon assembled all the domestics of her father.

"I expect company," said Mrs. Montagu, with an air of excessive consequence. "My brother-in-law, Sir Ambrose Montagu, and my

nephew, Lord Edmund Montagu, are coming to stay with us during a triumph, with which her most gracious Majesty the Queen intends to honour Lord Edmund, my nephew. When did my brother-in-law, Sir Ambrose, say that he and my nephew, Lord Edmund, intended coming, Mr. Montagu? Clara, look at Sir Ambrose's letter. 'I intend,' says he, addressing Mr. Montagu, 'with your and Mrs. Montagu's permission, to be with you on such a day,' but I forget what day he mentions."

"He does not say which day," replied Clara, consulting the letter.

"Well, at any rate, it will be very soon," resumed Mrs. Montagu; "and we must prepare accordingly. You know, the connexions of my brother-in-law, Sir Ambrose, are very high, and I do not doubt but his intimate friend, the Duke of Cornwall, will call to see him—nay, perhaps, he may dine at my table with the two princesses, his daughter and niece. Indeed there's no knowing, but, perhaps, even her most gracious Majesty the

Queen may condescend to enter my humble doors. Do you hear, all of you?—you must all be attentive. You Angelina, as cook, will have the most upon your hands—remember, nothing can be too plain for great people. Fricassees and ragouts are only devoured by the *canaille*.”

“ I am instructed of that, Ma’am,” replied Angelina, a great, fat, bonny-looking cook,—“ but I flatter myself I know how to concoct dishes.——”

“ That is the very thing I want to avoid,” interrupted her mistress. “ It is the fashion now for great people to have only one dish, and that as plainly cooked as possible. I have been told by a friend of mine, who got a peep at the great dinner the Queen gave the other day to the foreign ambassadors, that there was nothing in the world upon the table, but a huge round of boiled beef, and a great dish of smoking potatoes, with their jackets on.”

“ Well, Ma’am,” returned Angelina, “ I will rally both my physical and mental energies to afford you all the satisfaction in my

power; notwithstanding which, I am free to confess, that, in my opinion, the gastronomic science is now cruelly neglected, and that I do not think the digestive powers of the stomach can be properly excited from their dormant state by such unstimulating food as that you mention. Besides, the muscular force of the stomach must be strained to decompose such solid viands, and I should think the diaphragm seriously injured—”

“ You, Alphonso,” continued Mrs. Montagu, addressing the footman, and cruelly interrupting the learned harangue of the cook, “ must have a new suit of livery. In the mean time, arrange properly the best drawing-room, and clean the pictures. There is a fine large painting of one of the old English artists, over the door, the colours of which are quite faded; I am afraid you have used something improper to clean it.”

“ Indeed, Madam,” returned Alphonso, “ I think the fault is in the picture itself. It did not dry well originally; I don’t think the oil that was used in its composition had the car-

bon and hydrogen mingled in proper proportions. You know, Madam, that oil in general has an amazing affinity for oxygen, and absorbs it rapidly ; now, though the oil of this picture has been exposed for years to the action of the common atmospheric air, yet it has never thickened properly into a concrete state."

" Eustace ! you, as butler, must take care not to bring any variety of wines to the table : nothing is drunk now but port and sherry ; and even they are going out of fashion. Have plenty of strong ale, however, and porter, for they are now reckoned the most elegant liquors for the ladies."

" I shall do my utmost endeavour to obey your injunctions, Madam," said Eustace, bowing respectfully, " but I cannot imagine that any species of corn, even if it have undergone the vinous fermentation, can produce a liquid so agreeable to the palate, as well as conducive to the sanity of the body, as the juice of the grape."

" And you, Evelina and Cecilia," continued Mrs. Montagu, addressing her housemaids,

“ must superintend the arrangement of the dormitories: let the air out of the beds and re-inflate them—examine the elastic spring mattresses — mend the gossamer curtains — sweep the velvet carpets, and take care the tubes for withdrawing the decomposed air, and admitting fresh, are in proper order ;—also, clean out the baths attached to each chamber, and take care there is an abundant supply of water.”

“ I am told that ablution in the common aqueous fluid is becoming more fashionable than any medicated baths,” said Evelina, “ and that some people of rank actually use a composition of alkali and oil to remove the pulverous particles that may have lodged upon their epidermis in the course of the day.”

“ I fear from the commands you have issued, Madam,” rejoined Cecilia, “ that you were oblivious of the alteration that has been effected in the superior dormitory. The air there is no longer changed by means of tubes—but there is a fan-feather ventilator fixed in the ceiling, which by its gentle undulations occa-

sions a free circulation of the aëriform fluid; I do not think, however, that it is quite adequate to supply the place of the tubes; as upon entering the room the other morning, I perceived a strong sensation of azote, and I am confident that the proportion of nitrogen more than trebled that of oxygen in the air contained in the whole apartment."

"I am sorry for that," said Mrs. Montagu, "as it is the best sleeping-room: however, as it is too late to change it, we must do the best we can; and so go all of you and attend to my directions, for I should be very sorry to have my brother-in-law Sir Ambrose, and my nephew Lord Edmund, put to any inconvenience, during their sojourn in my dwelling; to say nothing of the great and noble guests who may perchance also honour the mansion with their presence."

Whilst this bustle was taking place in the house of Mr. Montagu, Edric and his tutor were on their way to London. It was with infinite difficulty, however, the doctor could be persuaded to set off without alarming the

family ; for, again and again, he would return to survey the treasures he was leaving behind, and the moment Edric thought he had him safe, he would recollect some indispensable requisite for their journey, and hurry back again to find it. At last they were fairly started, and a favourable wind blew them rapidly towards London. Edric had never seen this vast metropolis, and his astonishment and delight, when its magnificent palaces, its superb streets, its public buildings, its theatres, and its churches, broke upon him, was quite beyond description. His transports and exclamations, indeed, at length became so violent, as quite to annoy the learned doctor.

“ If you feel such rapture at the sight of London,” said he, peevishly, “ I suppose you will be reluctant to quit it ; and I dare say you already repent having proposed to travel.”

“ Oh ! what is that ?” cried Edric, without attending to him, as, lost in amazement, he saw a house in the suburbs gently slide out of its place, and glide majestically along the road, a lady at one of the windows kissing her hand to

some one in another house as she passed. "Do my eyes deceive me, or does that house move?"

"Certainly it does," replied the doctor. "Did you never see a moving house before? You must have heard of them at any rate, for nothing can be more common. It certainly is convenient, when one wants to go into the country for a few weeks, to be able to take one's house with one: it saves a great deal of trouble in packing, and permits one to have all one's little conveniences about one. You see there are grooves in the bottom of the houses that just fit on the iron railways; and as they are propelled by steam, they slide on without much trouble. It does not answer, however, with any but small houses, for large ones can't well be made compact enough. However, you must postpone your admiration of that, as well as of the other wonders of London, for here we are at Lord Gustavus's door. What a noble mansion! is it not? This street, Edric, is called the Strand, and is the most fashionable in London; because it adjoins the Queen's favourite palace at Somerset House."

“Is that the palace?” said Edric. “It seems a noble pile of building.”

“The gardens are fine,” replied the doctor; “but as they are thrown open to the public, and nothing is paid for admission, it is reckoned vulgar to walk in them. You English do not like any thing you do not pay for; but more of this hereafter. We must now prepare to pay our respects to our noble host.”

Lord Gustavus de Montfort received them very kindly, but Edric found something in his voice and manners excessively forbidding. He had a pompous disagreeable manner of speaking, with a nasal accent so strong, that it was absolutely torture to Edric, whose sense of hearing was uncommonly fine, to listen to him. He had also a conceited dictatorial way of delivering his opinion, which Edric thought extremely unpleasant. He generally commenced his speeches with “Thinking as I think, and as I am positive every one who hears me must think, or at least ought to think;” and this exordium formed an epitome of his character; as he was firmly persuaded that every one who

differed in the slightest degree from his opinion, was decidedly wrong, whilst the possibility of his ever being mistaken himself never entered his imagination. His father had been one of the counsellors of the late Queen, and his eldest brother having declined to take the father's place upon his death, Lord Gustavus had been appointed to it. Thus he was really a person of some consequence in the state; and though his being so was quite a matter of chance, arising from the circumstances above-mentioned and the indolence of the Queen, he affected to regard it as a matter of personal favour to himself, and endeavoured to persuade his hearers that the affairs of government could not possibly go on without him. Knowing his foible of wishing to be thought of importance in the realm, and feeling the want of a leader of rank, some of the discontented spirits of the kingdom had endeavoured to gain him over to their party; and though Lord Gustavus was strictly loyal, and even particularly fond of talking of her gracious Majesty the Queen, and boasting of the confidence she placed in

him, yet his vanity could not altogether resist the able attacks made upon it by the rebels. He wavered, he began to talk of reform, and to mingle boasts of his popularity amongst the people, with those he had before indulged in, of enjoying the favour of his sovereign. Thus he hung upon the balance, ready to incline to either side, according to the circumstances that time or chance might produce.

“ I am extremely happy,” said he, as he advanced to meet his guests, “ that my worthy and respected friend Father Morris has procured me the honour of such illustrious visitors. The holy father has informed me of the sublime purpose that animates your bosoms and leads you to traverse realms of air, to explore the hitherto undiscovered secrets of the grave. His partiality for me has also led him to imagine that my humble means may perchance prove conducive to so great an end, and he has requested me to give you all the assistance in my power to promote the gigantic objects you have in view. Thus you may rest assured, no efforts shall be wanting on my part to fulfil his wishes, and as,

though insignificant in myself, I am so happy as to be honoured by the protection and favour of her Majesty the Queen, my most gracious sovereign ; and also as my feeble attempts to promote the public good have been rewarded by the gratitude of the people ; it may perchance be in my power to serve you ; and in the mean time I hope you will do me the honour to partake of such hospitality as my humble mansion can afford."

So saying, Lord Gustavus led the way through a sumptuous suite of rooms, to one where an elegant cold collation was laid out, of which he invited his guests to partake. Nothing could be more splendid than the furniture and embellishments of this apartment. The rooms were hung with crimson silk, trimmed with gold ; valuable paintings decorated the walls ; statues of inestimable price filled each corner, and magnificent mirrors increased tenfold the magic of the scene. Lord Gustavus secretly enjoyed the astonishment and admiration painted upon the countenances of his guests ; and whilst he openly affected to talk of his " poor house," and his " humble attempts to entertain them," &c. his heart co-

vertly exalted in the grandeur around him, and his eyes sparkled with pleasure at the effect he saw it produced upon the strangers. Nothing makes one so much disposed to be in a good humour with the world, as being in a good humour with oneself; and nothing is so certain to produce that delightful sensation, as to see what we possess excite the admiration of others. Thus, as the flattery conveyed by looks far outweighs that expressed by words, and as the looks of Edric and the doctor unequivocally declared their sentiments, Lord Gustavus was quite enchanted with his visitors, and spared no pains to render them equally happy as himself. He ordered a large apartment to be prepared for the doctor, that he might make his arrangements for the intended Egyptian expedition quite at his ease; he commanded his servants to obey his directions implicitly, and he directed tradesmen to supply every thing that might be wanted at his own expense.

Having thus given the doctor *carte blanche*, he next turned his attention to Edric, and, finding it was his first visit to London, volunteered

to show him all the wonders of that immense metropolis, which then, spreading enormously in every direction, seemed like the fabled monster of the Indians, to stretch its enormous arms on every side and swallow up all the hapless villages which were so unfortunate as to fall within its reach.

In the mean time, Sir Ambrose had begun to repent, though secretly, of the unwarrantable severity with which he had treated his son. It is a trite though undeniable observation, that we never know the real value of any possession till we have lost it; and thus Sir Ambrose, though he had thought nothing of the respectful and dutiful attentions of his son, whilst he was in the habit of constantly receiving them, now felt their want, and regretted bitterly the ill-timed harshness that had deprived him of them for ever. Still, however, he was too obstinate to own he had been wrong; and though he knew that by recalling his son he should restore his lost happiness, he, like many other persons in similar situations, most magnanimously determined to persist in being miserable.

The Duke of Cornwall was quite astonished, and even indignant, at what he termed the inconsistency of his friend. “How can you be so weak as still to regret the loss of that peevish boy?” said he, as, on the second morning after Edric’s departure, he entered the library of Sir Ambrose, attended by his confessor, Father Murphy. “Depend upon it, it is bad policy; for patience robs care of its bitterest sting, as this holy father says. You often preach that doctrine to me, don’t you, Father Murphy?”

Father Murphy was an Irishman, and gifted with a rich brogue, which, aided by his comely figure, round rosy face, and little laughing black eyes, gave a peculiar raciness to every thing he said. He had not long filled the office he then held, and though he had been recommended to it, on the death of the duke’s late confessor, by Father Morris, yet no two human beings could be more different than he and that reverend personage. Father Murphy, indeed, was a general favourite, and the whole household of the duke concurred in thinking him quite a nonpareil of a priest; for, as he was not very fond of doing

penance himself, so he was not very rigid in imposing it upon others, and consequently he and his penitents were always upon the best terms imaginable. In short, he seemed especially designed by Nature to be good friends with all the world ; and on his side he certainly did the utmost not to thwart the beneficent old lady's kind intentions.

He now smiled good-humouredly at the duke's question, and replied, " Och ! and is it me ye're quoting from, yere Grace ? And where's the use of that, pray ? when ye know I'm just here and ready to quote for myself."

" If all your observations are as good as that the duke has just repeated," said Sir Ambrose, " I don't know any body that might be quoted from with more advantage."

" Och ! and is it of myself ye're saying that ?" asked Father Murphy, " for if ye are, ye never made a better spach in all your life ; only there's a little mistake if ye think the observation ye're talking of came out of my own head, for it didn't do any such thing."

" Do not be alarmed," said Father Morris,

who now approached, and who spoke with his usual satirical sneer : “ No one who knows you will ever suspect you of any thing so atrocious.”

“ Good-nature and integrity are sometimes more than equivalent to brilliant talents,” said Sir Ambrose bitterly.

“ True,” rejoined Father Morris, in one of his softest, most insinuating tones ; “ but they become inestimable when united, as in the example before us :” bowing to Father Murphy as he spoke. Sir Ambrose turned, and looked earnestly at the tall thin figure of the monk as he stood before him, his arms crossed upon his breast, and his head, as usual, bent towards the ground, but he did not speak. A short pause ensued, which was broken by the duke’s suddenly exclaiming, “ Did you not say Dr. Entwerfen has gone off with Edric ?”

“ Certainly, I did.”

“ Then, depend upon it, the whole was a planned thing. They have taken some wild scheme into their heads, and they are gone to execute it.”

“Impossible !” exclaimed Sir Ambrose.

“I see no impossibility in the business,” resumed the duke. “I think the case is clear. They did not know how to get off decently ; and so Edric pretended to quarrel with you and me, to give the thing a face.”

“I cannot fancy Edric guilty of such meanness,” cried Sir Ambrose passionately.

“I don’t think the matter admits of a single doubt. But what do you think on the subject, Father Morris ?”

“Men devoted to austere professions like myself,” replied the priest, without raising his eyes from the ground, “know but little of what is passing in the world. Thus, though my body be no longer shrouded in the gloom of a cloister, my mind remains still too much abstracted from the busy scenes around me, for me to be a competent judge of the effect of human passions.”

“Och, then, ye are very right to say nothin’ about them,” cried Father Murphy ; “for though I’m in a passion every day of my life, I nevher know what to say when I begin to talk

of it. And so I jist think it's the wisest way to holdth my tongue."

Neither Sir Ambrose nor the duke made any reply ; and after settling that they should commence their journey on the following morning, they separated.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE journey of the duke and Sir Ambrose to London had nothing in it to distinguish it from hundreds of other journeys, and they did not meet with a single adventure worthy of being recorded.

It happened by one of those singular coincidences in real life, which would be called improbable in a novel, that Mr. Montagu's mansion adjoined that of the duke, Mrs. Montagu having, like most of the *parvenu* genus, a most violent *penchant* for the neighbourhood of the great; perhaps, in the hope that gentility might be infectious, and that she might catch a little by being near it. Both houses were in the Strand, which was, as we

have before stated, in those days the most fashionable part of London, and both had beautiful gardens shelving down to the Thames.

Mrs. Montagu received her brother-in-law with all that awkward overstrained civility, with which persons raised above their original grade in society, generally endeavour to show their respect to those whom they consider as their superiors ; whilst Mr. Montagu welcomed him with warm affection, and presented his daughter Clara to her uncle with all the fondness of a parent.

Clara Montagu well deserved his partiality, for she was a charming girl ; and her light fairy form and animated features seemed to realize all that poets feign of Hebe. Sir Ambrose was delighted with her, and half his dislike of the mother banished, as he contemplated the budding charms of the daughter. It was well he had such an antidote, for poor Mrs. Montagu, in her over-anxiety to render herself agreeable, contrived to be most excessively annoying to him. Perhaps, indeed, there are few things more troublesome than this vul-

gar attempt at politeness, and the good temper of the baronet was almost exhausted ere he retired for the night.

Abelard, who had accompanied his master to town, and who often officiated as groom of the chamber, assisted him to undress, and, as usual with servants in those days, took the liberty of giving his opinion freely of their hostess. Sir Ambrose felt no interest in his remarks, but he did not check them, as he hoped, after he had exhausted this theme, he might turn the conversation upon Edric. The baronet was indeed excessively anxious to hear some news of his son, though he was by far too proud to make any inquiries respecting him.

“So you really think Mrs. Montagu disagreeable, Abelard,” said Sir Ambrose.

“She is a perfect nuisance, your honour, to all civilized society. Why, I have observed her all day, and I verily believe she has never left your honour for ten minutes, nor ever ceased for more than half an hour at a time, pressing your honour to eat.”

“True,” said Sir Ambrose, laughing, “one

would think she took me for a slave, and wanted to feed me up fat before she sent me to market to be sold."

"Then she is so curious and inquisitive," resumed Abelard. "When she saw me bow to Master Edric just now, she was quite in a fever to know who he was; but I would not satisfy her."

"Master Edric!" exclaimed the baronet. "What, then! have you seen my son?"

"Yes, your honour, and it startled me so that it made me raise the adnatæ of my visual organs like one of the anas genus when the clouds are charged with electric fluid; and my heart leaped from its transverse position on my diaphragm, and seemed to stick like a great bone right across my œsophagus.

"How did he look?" asked Sir Ambrose. "Not that I feel the slightest anxiety respecting him. No—no, his own conduct has quite precluded that."

"He was in a balloon, and when he saw me, he wrote something on a piece of paper

with a pencil, and threw it down, desiring me to give it to your honour.”

“Where is it?” cried Sir Ambrose, endeavouring to conceal his anxiety.

Abelard searched his pockets, and opened a large pocket-book, which he carefully examined, but in vain. “I am afraid I have lost it, your honour. No; here—here it is. Yes,—no. These are some verses of my own, in the acromonogrammatic style, only every line begins with the same *word* with which the last ended, instead of the same letter. Shall I read them to your honour?”

Sir Ambrose groaned in the spirit, and the unmerciful Abelard, taking that for a token of assent, deliberately unfolded the paper, and read as follows:—

ON LOVE.

OF all the powers in Heaven above,
Above all others, triumphs Love :
Love rules the soul—the heart invades,
Invades the cities and the shades.

Shades form no shelter from its power,
Power trembles in his courtly bower.
Bower of beauty—art thou free?
Free thou art not—nor canst thou be!
Be every other class released,
Released from love, thy woe's increased;
Increased by all the weight of care,
Care flowing from complete despair."

"Humph!" said Sir Ambrose.

"I hope your honour is pleased with this little effusion of my Muse?"

"Oh yes, it is very fine, Abelard."

"And your honour thinks it well turned, and well expressed."

"Excellently! only I own I don't understand why despair comes in the last line."

"Despair—despair: oh! to rhyme with care, your honour."

"That reason is unanswerable," returned Sir Ambrose, smiling. — "And so you are quite sure you have lost Edric's note!—Not that it is of the least consequence, as nothing he could say, can possibly alter my opinion of his conduct; but, if you had had it—I thought

I might as well have read it, to avoid the imputation of obstinacy."

"It is irrevocably gone, your honour."

"Well then, good night; and, if you should see Edric again, you may as well tell him the fate of his note;—for, shamefully as he has behaved, I would not give him reason to accuse me of obstinacy."

This was the second time the baronet had made the same observation; and ill-natured people might have said—but what do the remarks of ill-natured people signify to us? We hope all our readers will be good-natured ones, and as they will assuredly put the best possible construction upon Sir Ambrose's conduct, we will not be so malicious as to suggest an evil one.

Edric was exceedingly agitated by his encounter with Abelard; and, feeling convinced his father was in town, he determined to delay his journey no longer, as his dread of meeting him was excessive. He therefore resolved to seek his tutor, and, if he found him still inclined to procrastinate, to set off without him. On

reaching the doctor's chamber, however, he found half his anger converted into laughter at the ludicrous situation of the poor philosopher, who, surrounded as he was on every side by a crowd of tradesmen clamorous for orders, looked something like Mercury encircled by a tribe of discontented ghosts upon the banks of the Styx.

“ Yes, yes, Mr. Jones,” said he ; “ I see you understand me. The coats are to be those woven in machines, where the wool is stripped off the sheep's back by one end, and the coat comes out completely made, in the newest fashion, at the other.”

“ Very well, Sir,” said Mr. Jones, wagging his ears in token of assent ; for in those days of universal education, even the muscles of the head were trained to perform functions which in former days it was only supposed possible they *might* attain : “ You are quite right, Sir,—no person of fashion ever wears any thing else now.”

“ Oh, Edric !” cried the doctor, “ I shall be

ready to attend to you directly ;—and so, Mrs. Celestina, you must make the soup, if you please, water-proof ; and you, Mr. Crispin, must have the boots ready to dissolve, at a moment's notice. Oh, dear ! oh, dear, what a perplexity I am in, my head is going just like a steam-boat, at the rate of sixty miles an hour !”

“ Upon my word, doctor,” said Edric, looking round in dismay, “ if we are to take half the things assembled here, I do not know where we shall find a balloon large enough and strong enough even to raise us from the ground.”

“ I will show you one,” replied the doctor, mysteriously ; and solemnly drawing forth from his bosom a key, which appeared to have been suspended by a ribbon from his neck, he slowly opened, with great difficulty, a secret drawer in his escritoire, and produced from its inmost recesses a small bottle of Indian rubber. The gravity of the doctor's manner, and the length of time that he had employed in this

operation, had excited Edric's curiosity, and he burst into a violent and uncontrollable fit of laughter when he saw the result.

"What is the matter, Edric?" asked the doctor, with the utmost solemnity; "what can be the occasion of this uncereemonious and ill-timed levity?"

"Parturient mountains, my dear doctor," replied Edric, still laughing,—“you know the rest.”

"Ridicule, Edric," said the doctor gravely, "is by no means the test of truth. Fools often,—nay, generally, laugh at what they cannot understand, and when I shall have explained the motives of my conduct, I trust you will feel ashamed of your present weak and unseasonable mirth."

"Caoutchouc, Edric, is a substance capable of astonishing dilation and contraction; whilst the peculiar elasticity and tenacity of its fibres give it a strength and solidity, very rare in bodies when in a state of extreme tension. There are several very extraordinary phenomena relating to elastic bodies, which I am happy to

have an apposite opportunity of explaining to you." (Edric yawned.) "You know, elastic substances have the power of wonderfully resisting a force which would annihilate solids, apparently infinitely stronger than themselves, as a feather-bed will repulse a cannon-ball that would penetrate with ease through a thick table. Now the reason for this is clear: the elastic body has the power of summoning all its forces to its assistance, for the effect of a blow may be traced even to its remotest extremity; whereas the solid substance can only oppose its enemy by the mere resistance of the identical part struck."

"Certainly," said Edric, striving to suppress a yawn; "nothing can be more clear."

"Nothing," resumed the doctor. "I was sure you would admire the force of my reasoning; indeed, I see the excess of your admiration in the involuntary yawns in which you have been indulging. On some occasions, Edric, man shakes off the artificial restraints of society, and breaks forth into the full freedom of honest and unsophisticated nature:—

thus it was with you, Edric. In ancient times, the extension of the jaws was held synonymous with the extension of the understanding, and the opening of the mouth and eyes was considered as the greatest possible sign of pleasure that could be given. In the works of an ancient author, whose poetry was doubtless once esteemed very fine, since it is now quite unintelligible, we find the following passage:—

‘ And Hodge stood lost in wide-mouth’d speculation.’

Again,

‘ His eyes and mouth the hero open’d wide.’

—And divers others, which——”

“ We will leave till a more convenient opportunity, if you please,” said Edric, interrupting him. “ At present, do favour me for five minutes with your attention. We cannot take all these things.”

“ Why not ?” asked the doctor, gazing at his pupil with surprise ; “ for my part, I do not think we can dispense with a single article.”

“These cloaks,” said Edric, “and those hampers, for instance, cannot be of the slightest use.”

“I beg your pardon,” returned the doctor. “The cloaks are of asbestos, and will be necessary to protect us from ignition, if we should encounter any electric matter in the clouds; and the hampers are filled with elastic plugs for our ears and noses, and tubes and barrels of common air, for us to breathe when we get beyond the atmosphere of the earth.”

“But what occasion shall we have to go beyond it?”

“How can we do otherwise? Surely you don’t mean to travel the whole distance in the balloon? I thought, of course, you would adopt the present fashionable mode of travelling, and after mounting the seventeen miles or thereabouts, which is necessary to get clear of the mundane attraction, to wait there till the turning of the globe should bring Egypt directly under our feet.”

“But it is not in the same latitude.”

“True ; I did not think of that ! Well, then,” sighing deeply, “I suppose we must do without the hamper ?”

“Certainly ; and without those boxes and bottles too, I hope.”

“Oh no ! we can’t do without those. Those bottles contain my magic elixir, that cures all diseases merely by the smell :—a new idea that. You know it has been long discovered, that the whole *materia medica* might be carried in a ring, and that all the instruments of surgery might be compressed into a walking-stick. But the idea of sniffing health in a pinch of snuff is, I flatter myself, exclusively my own.”

“Very likely ; but we cannot be encumbered with your panacea in our aerial tour.”

“Then that box contains my portable galvanic battery ; that, my apparatus for making and collecting the inflammable air ; and that, my machine for producing and concentrating the quicksilver vapour, which is to serve as the propelling power to urge us onwards, in the place of steam ; and these bladders are filled

with laughing gas, for the sole purpose of keeping up our spirits."

"The three first will be useful," said Edric ;
"but I will positively have no more".

"Adieu ! adieu ! then, my precious treasures !" exclaimed the doctor, looking sorrowfully around : "Dear offspring of my cares ! children of my mind ! and must I leave you to some rude hand, which, heedless of your inestimable worth, may scatter your beauties to the winds ? Alas ! alas !"

"Breakfast is ready, and my lord is waiting !" interrupted the shrill voice of one of Lord Gustavus's servants.

"Then we must go !" said the doctor ; and the rest of his pathetic lamentation remained for ever buried in his own bosom.

Lord Gustavus was already seated when they entered the room, with two gentlemen, whom he introduced to our travellers as Lord Noodle and Lord Doodle. These noble lords were both counsellors of state as well as their illustrious host, and had attained that high honour

in exactly the same way, viz. they had both succeeded their respective fathers. It is not easy to be very diffuse in their description, as they were members of that honourable and numerous fraternity, who never take the trouble of judging for themselves, but contentedly swim with the stream, whichever way it may flow, and have nothing about them to distinguish them in the slightest degree from the crowd. Lord Gustavus was at present their leading star, and they might very appropriately be termed his satellites. Thus, when any new idea was started, they cautiously refrained from giving an opinion till they found what *he* thought of it:—they would then look wise, shake their heads, and say, “Exactly so!” “Certainly!” “Nobody can doubt it!” or some of those other convenient *ripieno* phrases, which fill up so agreeably the pauses in the conversation, without requiring any troublesome exertion of the mental powers of either the hearer or the speaker. These gentlemen had now visited Lord Gustavus, for the purpose of accompanying him and Edric to the Queen’s levee, and as

soon as they had taken breakfast, the whole party, with the exception of Dr. Entwerfen, proceeded to court.

When arrived there, however, they found the Queen had not yet risen. "Her Majesty is late this morning," observed Lord Maysworth, a gentleman loaded with orders and decorations, addressing Lord Gustavus:—"I am not surprised," said his lordship, "for her most gracious Majesty told me the other day, that she has slept badly for some time."

"Which, of course, caused you great grief?" asked Dr. Hardman, a little, satirical-looking gentleman in a bob-wig.

"Thinking as I think," said Lord Gustavus gravely, "and as I am sure every one here must think, or at least ought to think, her Majesty's want of sleep is a circumstance of very serious importance."

"Oh! very!" exclaimed Lord Noodle, shaking his head. "Most assuredly!" cried Lord Doodle, shaking his.

"Why?" demanded the doctor; "of what possible consequence can it be to her

subjects, whether her Majesty sleeps soundly or has the night-mare?"

"Of the greatest consequence," replied Lord Gustavus solemnly.

"Nothing can be greater!" echoed his satellites.

"Well!" observed Lord Maysworth, "for my part, I am such a traitor as to think we might exist, even if the Queen did not sleep at all."

"Or if she slept for ever," rejoined the doctor significantly.

"Oh, fie!" cried Lord Gustavus; "what would become of us, if the great sun of the political hemisphere were to set!"

"We must watch the rising of another, I suppose," said Lord Maysworth."

"Yes," continued Dr. Hardman: "and then the energies of the people would be roused. They want awakening from their present slumber—they have slept too long under the paralyzing effects of tyranny. The government wants reform; corruption has eaten into its root, and it must be eradicated ere England can be free, or its people happy. Would to

Heaven I might live to aid in the glorious struggle; that I might see the people assert their rights, and the fiend, Despotism, sink beneath their blows."

"I have ever admired," said Lord Maysworth, "the high integrity and fine principles of the worthy doctor, which have not only obtained for him the applause of England, but the admiration of Europe. The courage, wisdom, and purity of his mind cannot be too highly extolled; and all who know him concur in calling him the firm and devoted friend of mankind. I also have been an humble supporter of plans of economy and retrenchment; and it was I who had the honour of suggesting to the council the other day, that an humble petition should be presented to her Majesty, requesting her respectfully to order a diminution of the lights in her saloon, proving incontestably, that there were, at least, six more than were absolutely necessary."

"Thinking as I think, and as I am sure every one here must think," began Lord Gustavus,—but ere he had time to finish his exordium, the folding doors at the back of

the audience chamber were thrown open, and the Queen appeared, sitting upon a gorgeous throne, and surrounded by the officers of her household all splendidly attired.

The usual ceremonies then took place:— Claudia smiled graciously on Edric, as he kissed her hand, and inquired when he intended to depart. Edric informed her on the morrow; when, condescending to express regret, and desiring to see him on his return, she wished him an agreeable voyage, and dismissed him.

During their ride home, Lord Gustavus could talk of nothing but the graciousness of the Queen, upon which he was still expatiating, when the balloon stopped; and Edric, who, though he felt grateful for her kindness, was annoyed by hearing so much said of it, hastened to leave him as soon as he possibly could with propriety. On his road to his own apartment, however, he heard a strange and fearful noise, like the voice of some one screaming in an agony of rage and pain, which seemed to proceed from the chamber appropriated to his learned tutor; and he

was going there to ascertain the cause, when the agitated form of the unfortunate philosopher burst upon him.

Sad, indeed, was the condition in which this splendid ornament of the twenty-second century now presented himself before the eyes of his astonished pupil. His face glowed like fire; his hat was off, and water streamed from every part of his body till he looked like the effigy of a water deity in a fountain.

“Here is management!” cried he, as soon as his rage permitted him to speak; “here is treatment for one devoted to the service of mankind! But I will be revenged, and centuries yet to come, shall tremble at my wrath.”

In this manner he continued, and being too much occupied in these awful denunciations, to be able to give any information as to what calamity had brought him into this unseemly plight, it will be necessary to go back a little to explain it for him.

When Dr. Entwerfen left the breakfast-room of Lord Gustavus, which he did not do till a considerable time after the rest of the party had quitted it, he was so absorbed in meditation

that he did not know exactly which way he was going ; and, happening unfortunately to turn to the right when he should have gone to the left, to his infinite surprise he found himself in the kitchen, instead of his own study.

Absent as the doctor was, however, his attention was soon roused by the scene before him. Being, like many of his learned brotherhood, somewhat of a gourmand, his indignation was violently excited by finding the cook comfortably asleep on a sofa on one side of the room, whilst the meat intended for dinner, a meal it was then the fashion to take about noon, was as comfortably resting itself from its toils on the other. The chemical substitute for fire, which ought to have cooked it, having gone out, and the cook's nap precluding all reasonable expectation of its re-illumination, the doctor's wrath was kindled, though the fire was not, and in a violent rage he seized the gentle Celestina's shoulder, and shook her till she woke.

“Where am I?” exclaimed she, opening her eyes.

“Any where but where you ought to be,” cried the doctor, in a fury. “Look, hussy !

look at that fine joint of meat, lying quite cold and sodden in its own steam."

"Dear me!" returned Celestina, yawning, "I am really quite unfortunate to-day! An unlucky accident has already occurred to a leg of mutton which was to have formed part of to-day's aliments; and now this piece of beef is also destroyed. I am afraid there will be nothing for dinner but some mucilaginous saccharine vegetables, and they, most probably, will be boiled to a viscous consistency."

"And what excuse can you offer for all this?" exclaimed the doctor, his voice trembling with passion.

"It was unavoidable;" replied Celestina, coolly; "whilst I was copying a cast from the Apollo Belvidere this morning, having unguardedly applied too much caloric to the vessel containing the leg of mutton, the aqueous fluid in which it was immersed, evaporated, and the viand became completely calcined. Whilst the other affair—"

"Hush, hush!" interrupted the doctor; "I cannot bear to hear you mention it. Oh, surely Job himself never suffered such a trial of his

patience ! In fact, *his* troubles were scarcely worth mentioning, for he was never cursed with learned servants !”

Saying this the doctor retired, lamenting his hard fate in not having been born in those halcyon days when cooks drew nothing but their poultry ; whilst the gentle Celestina’s breast panted with indignation at his complaint. An opportunity soon offered for revenge ; and seeing the doctor’s steam valet ready to be carried to its master’s chamber, she treacherously applied a double portion of caloric : in consequence of which, the machine burst whilst in the act of brushing the doctor’s coat collar, and by discharging the whole of the scalding water contained in its cauldron upon him, reduced him to the melancholy state we have already mentioned.

The fear of the ridicule attached to this incident, in a great measure reconciled the doctor to Edric’s project of a speedy departure, and the following morning they bade adieu to Lord Gustavus, and, stepping into their balloon, sailed for Egypt.

CHAPTER IX.

No event of any importance occurred to our travellers in the course of their aërial voyage. They were too well provided with all kinds of necessaries to have any occasion to rest by the way, and in an incredibly short space of time they were hovering over Egypt. Different, however, oh ! how different from the Egypt of the nineteenth century, was the fertile country which now lay like a map beneath their feet. Improvement had turned her gigantic steps towards its once desert plains ; Commerce had waved her magic wand ; and towns and cities, manufactories and canals, spread in all directions. No more did the Nile overflow its banks : a thousand channels were cut to receive its waters. No longer did the moving sands of the Desert

rise in mighty waves, threatening to overwhelm the way-worn traveller: macadamized turnpike roads supplied their place, over which post-chaises, with anti-attributioned wheels, bowled at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. Steamboats glided down the canals, and furnaces raised their smoky heads amidst groves of palm-trees; whilst iron railways intersected orange groves, and plantations of dates and pomegranates might be seen bordering excavations intended for coal pits. Colonies of English and Americans peopled the country, and produced a population that swarmed like bees over the land, and surpassed in numbers even the wondrous throngs of the ancient Mizraim race; whilst industry and science changed desolation into plenty, and had converted barren plains into fertile kingdoms.

Amidst all these revolutions, however, the Pyramids still raised their gigantic forms, towering to the sky; unchanged, unchangeable, grand, simple, and immoveable, fit symbols of that majestic nature they were intended to represent, and seeming to look down with contempt upon the ephemeral structures with

which they were surrounded; as though they would have said, had utterance been permitted to them—"Avaunt, ye nothings of the day. Respect our dignity and sink into your original obscurity; for know, that we alone are monarchs of the plains." Indestructible, however, as they had proved themselves, even their granite sides had not been able entirely to resist the corroding influence of the smoke with which they were now surrounded, and a slight crumbling announced the first outward symptom of decay. Still, however, though blackened and disfigured, they shone stupendous monuments of former greatness; and Edric and his tutor gazed upon them with an awe that for some moments deprived them of utterance.

The doctor, however, who was too fond of reasoning ever long to remain willingly silent, after surveying them a few minutes, broke forth as follows:—"What noble piles! What majesty and grandeur they display in their formation, and yet what dignified simplicity! Can the imagination of man conceive any thing more sublime than the thought that they have stood thus frowning in awful magnificence, perhaps

since the very creation of the world, without equals, without even competitors,—mocking the feeble efforts of man to divine their origin, and seeing generation after generation pass away, whilst they still remain immutable, and involved in the same deep and unfathomable mystery as at first.”

“It is very strange,” observed Edric, “that, in this age of speculation and discovery, nothing certain should be known concerning them.”

“It is,” returned the doctor; “but the thick mysterious veil that has rested upon them for so many ages, seems not intended to be removed by mortal hands. They remind one of the sublime inscription upon the temple of the goddess Isis, at Sais :—‘I am whatever was, whatever is, and whatever shall be; but no mortal has, as yet, presumed to raise the veil that covers me.’”

“Your quotation is apt, doctor,” resumed Edric, “for both relate to Nature. Indeed, Nature appears to be the deity which the ancient Egyptians worshipped, under all the various forms in which she presents herself; and their strange and animal deities were but revered as her symbols. It was Nature whom they worshipped

as Isis ; it was Nature that was typified in the Pyramids ; and the good taste of the Egyptians made them prefer the simple, the majestic, and the sublime, in those works which they destined to last for ages. Formerly, from the immensity of their population, and high state of their civilization, labour was so divided, and consequently so lightened, that multitudes were enabled to exist exempt from toil. These persons, devoting themselves to study, became *initiati* ; and either enrolled themselves amongst the priesthood, or passed their lives in making themselves masters of the most abstract sciences. The consequences were natural : they followed up the ramifications of creation to their original source ; they penetrated into the most profound secrets of Nature, and traced all her wonders in her works : aware, however, of the taste of the vulgar for any thing above their comprehension, and of the natural craving of the human mind for mystery, they wrapped the discoveries they had made in a deep and impenetrable veil, and concealed awful and sublime significations under the meanest and most disgusting images."

“You are right,” said the doctor, “in your observations upon the religion of the ancient Egyptians; but it does not appear to me that the Pyramids were erected by them.”

“What! I suppose you draw your conclusions from the want of hieroglyphics in their principal chambers; and, from what Herodotus says of their having been erected by a shepherd, you think they were the work of the Pallic race.”

“No; though I allow much may be said in favour of that hypothesis, particularly as Herodotus says the kings under whom they were erected, ordered all the Egyptian temples to be closed, which we know the shepherd or Pallic sovereign did; but I cannot imagine that an ignorant, Goth-like race of shepherds, men accustomed to live in tents or in the open air, and possessing no talents but for war, were capable of constructing such immense piles. No, no, the Pyramids required gigantic conceptions, highly cultivated minds, and unwearied perseverance; all qualities quite incompatible with a warlike wandering race. No, I do not think the Palli were capable of imagining such

structures, much less of constructing them. I think they were the work of evil spirits."

"Evil spirits!" exclaimed Edric.

"Yes," returned the doctor. "We are told that the evil spirits, after their expulsion from Paradise, were under the command of the Sultan, or Soliman Giam ben Giam, as he is called by Arabic writers, but who is supposed to have been the same as Cheops; and that he employed them in this vast work."

"I do not know by what analysis etymologists can draw the name of Cheops from that of Giam ben Giam: but, supposing the fact to be correct, that they designated the same person, I think it only proves more strongly my hypothesis; for the Palli came from Mount Caucasus, where the evil spirits were said to have been enchained, and if Cheops was a Pallic king, it is possible the Egyptians might poetically call their conquerors evil spirits."

"That is a good idea, Edric; though I do not think it by any means certain that Cheops was a Pallic king. However, we shall soon be able to see his tomb, and judge for ourselves; for we have now approached near enough to the

Pyramids to descend. Foh ! what a smoke and what a noise ! It is enough to rouse the mummies from their slumbers before their appointed time, and without the aid of galvanism. Have you opened the valves, Edric ? Oh yes ! I perceive we are getting lower ; we will not lose a moment before we visit the Pyramid. But what a crowd of brutes are assembled to witness our arrival ! they stare as though they had never seen a balloon before. Egypt is certainly a fine country, but the inhabitants are a century behind us in civilization."

An immense crowd had gathered together to witness the descent of our travellers, and they did indeed stand staring, lost in stupid astonishment at the strange sight that presented itself ; for though the Egyptian people had occasionally seen balloons, they had never before beheld one made of Indian rubber. The odd figure of the doctor, too, amused them exceedingly, as he sat wrapt up in the most dignified manner in an asbestos cloak, his bob-wig pushed a little on one side from the heat of the weather and the warmth of his argument ; his round, red, oily face attempting to look solemn, and his

little, fat, punchy figure trying to assume an air of majesty. The Egyptians were amazingly struck with this apparition, and being, like most colonists, somewhat conceited and not very ceremonious in their manners, they looked at him a few minutes in silence, and then burst into immoderate fits of laughter.

The doctor was exceedingly indignant at this rude reception, and rising, shook his fist at them in anger; a manœuvre, however, that only redoubled the mirth of the unpolished Egyptians, whose peals of laughter now became so tremendous, that they actually shook the skies, and occasioned a most unpleasant vibration in the balloon. Edric, who was almost as much annoyed as the doctor, had yet sufficient self-command to continue calmly making preparations for his descent; and without taking the least notice of the crowd below, he screwed the top upon the propelling vapour-bottle; he let the inflammable air escape from the balloon, which rapidly collapsed as they approached the earth, and throwing out their patent spring grappling-irons, they caught one of the lower stones of the Great Pyramid, and in a few moments

the car in which our travellers were sitting, was safely moored at a convenient distance from the earth for them to alight. Edric now unloosed the descending ladder, and reverentially assisted the doctor, who was encumbered with his long cloak, to reach terra firma in safety,—amidst the bustle and exclamations of the crowd, who thronged round them expressing their wonder and astonishment audibly, in broad English.

“Where the deuce did this spring from?” cried one; “the car would load a waggon!”

“And what is gone with the balloon?” said another; “it is clean vanished!”

“Well, I never saw such a thing in all my life before!” exclaimed a third; “I think they must be come from the moon.”

“Hush! hush,” cried an old gentleman bustling amongst them, who seemed as one having authority. “What’s the matter? what’s the matter?”

“We are strangers, Sir,” said Edric, advancing and addressing him: “we come here to see the wonders of your country, and

we wish to explore the Pyramids—but the reception we have met with——”

“ Say no more—say no more !” interrupted the worthy justice, for such he was. “ Get about your business, you rascallions, or I’ll read the riot act ! Here, Gregory, call out the posse comitatus, and set a guard of constables to keep watch over these gentlemen’s balloon, whilst they go to explore the Pyramids. Eh ! but where is the balloon ? I don’t see it. I hope neither of the gentlemen has put it in his pocket !” laughing at his own wit.

“ No, Sir,” returned Edric, smiling, “ though it is a feat which might easily be accomplished, for that is our balloon,” pointing to the caoutchouc bottle, now shrunk to its original dimensions.

“ Very strange, that !” said the Justice ; “ Very curious, very curious indeed ! Well, gentlemen, if you wish to proceed immediately, you’ll want a guide of course. These cottages at the foot of the Pyramids are all inhabited by guides, who get their living by showing the sights. They are sad rogues, most of

them, but I can recommend you to one who is a very honest man. Here, Samuel," continued he, knocking against a small door, "Samuel ! I say !"

Samuel made his appearance, in the guise of a tall, raw-boned, stupid-looking fellow, with a pair of immensely broad stooping shoulders, which looked as though he could have relieved Atlas occasionally of his burthen, without much trouble to himself. Coming forth from his hut in an awkward shambling pace, he scratched his head, and demanded what his honour pleased to want.

"You must show these gentlemen the Pyramids," said the Justice.

"Ay, that I will with pleasure !" returned Samuel ; "I've got my living by showing them these fifty years, man and boy ; and I know every crink and cranny of them, though I'm old now and somewhat lame. So walk this way, gentlemen."

"We are very much obliged to you, Sir," said the doctor, bowing to the Justice ; who was in fact one of those good-natured, busy, bustling men, who are always better pleased to trans-

act any other person's business than their own ; and are never so happy as when a new arrival gives them an opportunity of showing off their consequence. Indeed, there is a pleasure in showing wonders to a stranger, that only those who have little else to occupy their minds can properly estimate : a man of this kind feels his self-love gratified by the superiority his local knowledge gives him over a stranger ; and, as it is, perhaps, the only chance he ever can have of showing superiority, they must be unreasonable who blame him for making the most of it. Justice Freemantle was accordingly exceedingly delighted with travellers who seemed disposed to submit implicitly to his dictation ; and he returned a most gracious reply to the doctor's thanks.

“ Don't mention it ! don't mention it, my dear Sir ! ” said he ; “ I am never so happy as when I can make myself useful. Is there any thing else I can do for you ? You may command me, I assure you ; and you may depend upon it, no injury shall be done to your luggage, whilst you are away.”

“ What a very civil, obliging, good-natured

old gentleman," said the doctor, as they walked towards the entrance of the Pyramids; "I declare he almost reconciles me to the country, though, I own, I thought at first the people were the greatest brutes I had ever met with."

"Which Pyramid does your honour wish to see?" asked the guide.

"That which contains the tomb of Cheops, man!" cried the doctor solemnly; who, encumbered with his long cloak, and loaded with his walking-stick and galvanic battery, had some difficulty in getting on.

"Won't your honour let me carry that pole and that bag?" said the man; "you'd get on a surprising deal better, if you would."

"Avaunt, wretch!" exclaimed the doctor, "nor offer to touch with thy profane fingers the immortal instruments of science."

The man stared, but fell back, and the whole party walked on in perfect silence.

In the mean time, Edric had walked on before his companions, completely lost in meditation. A crowd of conflicting thoughts rushed through his mind; and now, when he found himself at the

very goal of his wishes, the daring nature of the purpose he had so long entertained, seemed to strike him for the first time, and he trembled at the consequences that might attend the completion of his desires. With his arms folded on his breast, he stood gazing on the Pyramids, whilst his ideas wandered uncontrolled through the boundless regions of space : “ And what am I,” thought he, “ weak, feeble worm that I am ! who dare seek to penetrate into the awful secrets of my Creator ? Why should I wish to restore animation to a body now resting in the quiet of the tomb ? What right have I to renew the struggles, the pains, the cares, and the anxieties of mortal life ? How can I tell the fearful effects that may be produced by the gratification of my unearthly longing ? May I not revive a creature whose wickedness may involve mankind in misery ? And what if my experiment should fail, and if the moment when I expect my rash wishes to be accomplished, the hand of Almighty vengeance should strike me to the earth, and heap molten fire on my brain to punish my presumption ! ”

The sound of human voices, as the doctor and

the guide approached, grated harshly on the nerves of Edric, already overstrained by the awful nature of the thoughts in which he had been indulging, and he turned away involuntarily, to escape the interruption he dreaded, quite forgetting for the moment from whom the sounds most probably proceeded.

“Lord have mercy on us!” said the guide; “I declare that gentleman looks as if he were beside himself! and see there! if he hasn’t walked right by the entrance to the Pyramid without seeing it! Sir! Sir!” halloed he.

Excessively annoyed, but recalled to his recollection by these shouts, Edric returned.

“These Pyramids are wonderful piles,” said the doctor, as he stumbled forward to meet him. “I really had no adequate conception of the enormity of their size. They did not even look half so large at a distance as they do now.”

“Immense masses seldom do,” replied Edric; compelling himself with difficulty to speak.

“True,” returned the doctor; “the simplicity and uniformity of their figures deceive the

eyes, and it is only when we approach them that we feel their stupendous magnitude and our own insignificance !”

“ They give an amazing idea of the grandeur of the ancient kings of Egypt,” said Edric, without exactly knowing what he was saying. “ Their palaces must have been superb, if they had such mausoleums.”

“ How absurdly you reason, Edric !” replied the doctor peevishly ; for, being annoyed with his burthens and his cloak, he was not in a humour to bear contradiction. “ I thought we had settled that question before. In the first place, I think it very doubtful whether the Egyptians had any thing to do with the building of these monuments ; and if they had, I think they were meant for temples, not mausoleums ; and in the next place, even if they were intended for tombs, their greatness affords no argument for the splendour of the surrounding palaces ; as the Egyptians were celebrated for the superiority of their burying-places, and for the immense sums they expended upon them. Indeed, you know, ancient writers say they went so far as to call the houses of the

living only inns, whilst they considered tombs as everlasting habitations ;—a circumstance, by the way, that strongly corroborates my hypothesis, at least as far as their opinions go ; as it seems to imply that both soul and body were designed to remain there.”

They had now entered the Pyramid, and were proceeding with infinite difficulty along a low, dark, narrow passage : “ Observe, Edric,” said the doctor, “ how the difficulty and obscurity of these winding passages confirm my opinion : you know, the religion of the ancient Egyptians, like that of the ancient Hindoos, was one of penances and personal privations ; and, granting that to be the case, what can be more simple, than that the passages the *initiati* had to traverse before they reached the adytum, should be painful and difficult of access. Besides this, as you know, the bones of a bull, no doubt those of the god Apis, were found in a sarcophagus in the second Pyramid, it seems probable that it was sacred to his worship : and its vicinity to the Nile, which was indispensable to the temples of Apis, as, when it was time for him to die, he was drowned in

its waters, confirms the fact. Indeed, I am only surprised that any human being, possessing a grain of common sense, can entertain a single doubt upon the subject."

"How do you account for the tomb we are about to visit being placed in the Pyramid, if you think they were only designed for a temple?" asked Edric.

"The question is futile," said the doctor. "A strange fancy prevailed in former times: that burying the dead in consecrated places, particularly in temples intended for divine worship, would scare away the evil spirits, and the practice actually prevailed in England even as lately as the nineteenth or twentieth century. Indeed, it was not till after the country had been almost depopulated by the dreadfully infectious disease that prevailed about two hundred years ago, that a law was passed to prevent the interment of the dead in London, and that those previously buried in and near the churches there, were exhumed and placed in cemeteries beyond the walls."

Edric did not reply, for in fact his ideas were

so absorbed by the solemn object before him, that it was painful for him to speak, and the doctor's ill-timed reasoning created such an irritation of his nerves, that he found it required the utmost exertion of his self-command to endure it patiently. The passage they were traversing, now became higher and wider, shelving off occasionally into chambers or recesses on each side, till they approached a kind of vestibule, in the centre of which, yawned a deep, dark, gloomy-looking cavity, like a well.

"We must descend that shaft," said the guide, "and that will lead us to the tomb of King Cheops; but as the road is dark, and rather dangerous, we had better, each of us, take a torch."

As he spoke, he drew some torches from a niche where they were deposited, and began to illuminate them from his own. The red glare of the torches flashed fearfully on the massive walls of the Pyramid, throwing part of their enormous masses into deep shadow, as they rose in solemn and sublime dignity around, and seemed frowning upon the presumptuous

mortals that had dared to invade their recesses, whilst the deep pit beneath their feet seemed to yawn wide to engulf them in its abyss. Edric's heart beat thick : it throbbed till he even fancied its pulsations audible ; and a strange, mysterious thrilling of anxiety, mingled with a wild, undefinable delight, ran through his frame. A few short hours, and his wishes would be gratified, or set at rest for ever. The doctor and the guide had already begun to descend, and their figures seemed changed and unearthly as the gleams of the torches fell upon them. Edric gazed for a moment, and then followed with feelings worked up almost to frenzy by the over-excitement of his nerves ; whilst the hollow sound that re-echoed from the walls, as they struck against them in their descent, thrilled through his whole frame.

No one spoke ; and after proceeding for some time along the narrow path, or rather ledge, formed on the sides of the cavity, which gradually shelved downwards, the guide suddenly stopped, and touching a secret spring, a solid block of granite slowly detached itself from the

wall, and, rising majestically like the portcullis of an ancient fortress, showed the entrance to a dark and dreary cave. The guide advanced, followed by our travellers, into a gloomy vaulted apartment, where long vistas of ponderous arches stretched on every side, till their termination was lost in darkness, and gave a feeling of immensity and obscurity to the scene.

“ I will wait here,” said the guide ; “ and here, if you please, you had better leave your torches. That avenue will lead you to the tomb.”

The travellers obeyed ; and the guide, placing himself in a recess in the wall, extinguished all the torches except one, which he shrouded so as to leave the travellers in total darkness. Nothing could be now more terrific than their situation : immured in the recesses of the tomb, involved in darkness, and their bosoms throbbing with hopes that they scarcely dared avow even to themselves, with faltering steps they proceeded slowly along the path the guide had pointed out, shuddering even at the hollow echo of their own footsteps,

which alone broke the solemn silence that reigned throughout these fearful regions of terror and the tomb.

Suddenly, a vivid light flashed upon them, and, as they advanced, they found it proceeded from torches placed in the hands of two colossal figures, who, placed in a sitting posture, seemed guarding an enormous portal, surmounted by the image of a fox, the constant guardian of an Egyptian tomb. The immense dimensions and air of grandeur and repose about these colossi had something in it very imposing; and our travellers felt a sensation of awe creep over them as they gazed upon their calm unmoved features, so strikingly emblematic of that immutable nature which they were doubtless placed there to typify.

It was with feelings of indescribable solemnity, that the doctor and Edric passed through this majestic portal, and found themselves in an apartment gloomily illumined by the light shed faintly from an inner chamber, through ponderous brazen gates beautifully wrought. The light thus feebly emitted, showed that the room in which they stood, was dedicated to Typhon,

the evil spirit, as his fierce and savage types covered the walls ; and images of his symbols, the crocodile and the dragon, placed beneath the shadow of the brazen gates, and dimly seen by the imperfect light, seemed starting into life, and grimly to forbid the farther advance of the intruders. Our travellers shuddered, and opening with trembling hand the ponderous gates, they entered *the tomb of Cheops*.

In the centre of the chamber, stood a superb, highly ornamented sarcophagus of alabaster, beautifully wrought ; over this hung a lamp of wondrous workmanship, supplied by a potent mixture, so as to burn for ages unconsumed ; thus awfully lighting up with perpetual flame the solemn mansions of the dead, and typifying life eternal even in the silent tomb. Around the room, on marble benches, were arranged mummies simply dried, apparently those of slaves ; and close to the sarcophagus was placed one contained in a case, which the doctor approached to examine. This was supposed to be that of Sores, the confidant and prime-minister of Cheops. The chest that enclosed the body was splendidly ornamented

with embossed gilt leather, whilst the parts not otherwise covered were stained with red and green curiously blended, and of a vivid brightness.

The mighty Phtah, the Jupiter of the Egyptians, spread its widely extended wings over the head, grasping in his monstrous claws a ring, the emblem of eternity ; whilst below, the vulture form of Rhea proclaimed the deceased a votary of that powerful deity ; and on the sides were innumerable hieroglyphics. The doctor removed the lid, and shuddered as the crimson tinge of the everlasting lamp fell upon the hideous and distorted features thus suddenly exhibited to view. This sepulchral light, indeed, added unspeakable horror to the scene, and its peculiar glare threw such a wild and demoniac expression on the dark lines and ghastly lineaments of the mummies, that even the doctor felt his spirits depressed, and a supernatural dread creep over his mind as he gazed upon them.

In the mean time, Edric had stood gazing upon the sarcophagus of Cheops, the sides of which were beautifully sculptured with groups

of figures, which, from the peculiar light thrown upon them, seemed to possess all the force and reality of life. On one side was represented an armed and youthful warrior bearing off in his arms a beautiful female, on whom he gazed with the most passionate fondness. He was pursued by a crowd of people and soldiers, who seemed rending the air with vehement exclamations against his violence, and endeavouring in vain to arrest his progress; whilst in the background appeared an old man, who was tearing his hair and wringing his hands in ineffectual rage against the ravisher.

The other side, presented the same old man wrestling with the youthful warrior, who had just overpowered and stabbed him; the helpless victim raising his withered hands and failing eyes to Heaven as he fell, as though to implore vengeance upon his murderer, whilst the crimson current was fast ebbing from his bosom. The dying look and agony of the old man were forcibly depicted, whilst upon the features of the youthful warrior glowed the fury of a demon.

The sarcophagus was supported by the lion, emblem of royalty, the symbol of the solar

god Horus ; and above it sat the majestic hawk of Osiris, gazing upwards, and unmindful of the subtle crocodile of Typhon, that, crouching under its feet, was just about to seize its breast in its enormous jaws. Neither of the travellers had as yet spoken, for it seemed like sacrilege to disturb the awful stillness that prevailed even by a whisper. Indeed, the solemn aspect of the chamber thrilled through every nerve, and they moved slowly, gliding along with noiseless steps as though they feared prematurely to break the slumbers of the mighty dead it contained. They gazed, however, with deep but undefinable interest upon the sculptured mysteries of the tomb of Cheops, vainly endeavouring to decipher their meaning ; whilst, as they found their efforts useless, a secret voice seemed to whisper in their bosoms—"And shall finite creatures like these, who cannot even explain the signification of objects presented before their eyes, presume to dive into the mysteries of their Creator's will ? Learn wisdom by this omen, nor seek again to explore secrets above your comprehension ! Retire whilst it is yet time ; soon it will be too late !"

Edric started at his own thoughts, as the fearful warning, "soon it will be too late," rang in his ears; and a fearful presentiment of evil weighed heavily upon his soul. He turned to look upon the doctor, but he had already seized the lid of the sarcophagus, and, with a daring hand, removed it from its place, displaying in the fearful light the royal form that lay beneath. For a moment, both Edric and the doctor paused, not daring to survey it; and when they did, they both uttered an involuntary cry of astonishment, as the stern, but handsome, features of the mummy met their eyes, for both instantly recognized the sculptured warrior in his traits. Yes, it was indeed the same, but the fierce expression of fiery and ungoverned passions depicted upon the countenance of the marble figure, had settled down to a calm, vindictive, and concentrated hatred upon that of its mummy prototype in the tomb.

Awful, indeed, was the gloom that sat upon that brow, and bitter the sardonic smile that curled those haughty lips. All was perfect as though life still animated the form before them, and it had only reclined there to seek a short

repose. The dark eyebrows, the thick raven hair which hung upon the forehead, and the snow-white teeth seen through the half open lips, forbade the idea of death; whilst the fiend-like expression of the features made Edric shudder, as he recollected the purpose that brought him to the tomb, and he trembled at the thought of awakening such a fearful being from the torpor of the grave to all the renewed energies of life.

“Let us go,” whispered the doctor to his pupil, in a low, deep, and unearthly tone, fearfully different from his usually cheerful voice. Edric started at the sound, for it seemed the last sad warning of his better genius, before he abandoned her for ever. The die, however, was cast, and it was too late to recede. Indeed, Edric felt worked up to frenzy by the overwrought feelings of the moment. He seized the machine, and resolutely advanced towards the sarcophagus, whilst the doctor gazed upon him with a horror that deprived him of either speech or motion.

Innumerable folds of red and white linen, disposed alternately, swathed the gigantic but

well-proportioned limbs of the royal mummy ; and upon his breast lay a piece of metal, shining like silver, and stamped with the figure of a winged globe. Edric attempted to remove this, but recoiled with horror, when he found it bend beneath his fingers with an unnatural softness ; whilst, as the flickering light of the lamp fell upon the face of the mummy, he fancied its stern features relaxed into a ghastly laugh of scornful mockery. Worked up to desperation, he applied the wires of the battery and put the apparatus in motion, whilst a demoniac laugh of derision appeared to ring in his ears, and the surrounding mummies seemed starting from their places and dancing in unearthly merriment. Thunder now roared in tremendous peals through the Pyramids, shaking their enormous masses to the foundation, and vivid flashes of light darted round in quick succession. Edric stood aghast amidst this fearful convulsion of nature. A horrid creeping seemed to run through every vein, every nerve feeling as though drawn from its extremity, and wrapped in icy chillness round his heart. Still, he stood immoveable, and gazing intently on

the mummy, whose eyes had opened with the shock, and were now fixed on those of Edric, shining with supernatural lustre. In vain Edric attempted to rouse himself;—in vain to turn away from that withering glance. The mummy's eyes still pursued him with their ghastly brightness; they seemed to possess the fabled fascination of those of the rattle-snake, and though he shrunk from their gaze, they still glared horribly upon him. Edric's senses swam, yet he could not move from the spot; he remained fixed, chained, and immoveable, his eyes still riveted upon the mummy, and every thought absorbed in horror. Another fearful peal of thunder now rolled in lengthened vibrations above his head, and the mummy rose slowly, his eyes still fixed upon those of Edric, from his marble tomb. The thunder pealed louder and louder. Yells and groans seemed mingled with its roar;—the sepulchral lamp flared with redoubled fierceness, flashing its rays around in quick succession, and with vivid brightness; whilst by its horrid and uncertain glare, Edric saw the mummy stretch out its withered hand as

though to seize him. He saw it rise gradually—he heard the dry, bony fingers rattle as it drew them forth—he felt its tremendous gripe—human nature could bear no more—his senses were rapidly deserting him; he felt, however, the fixed stedfast eyes of Cheops still glowing upon his failing orbs, as the lamp gave a sudden flash, and then all was darkness! The brazen gates now shut with a fearful clang, and Edric, uttering a shriek of horror, fell senseless upon the ground; whilst his shrill cry of anguish rang wildly through the marble vaults, till its re-echoes seemed like the yell of demons joining in fearful mockery.

How long he lay in this state he knew not; but when he reopened his eyes, for the moment, he fancied all that had passed a dream. As his senses returned, however, he recollected where he was, and shuddered to find himself yet in that place of horrors. All now was dark, except a faint gleam that shone feebly through the half-open gates; these ponderous portals slowly unclosed, and the form of a man, wrapped in a large cloak, and bearing a torch, entered, peering around as it advanced, as though half afraid

to proceed. Edric's feelings were too highly wrought to bear any fresh horrors, and he shrieked in agony as the figure approached. The sound of his voice subdued the terrors of the intruder, and the doctor, for it was he, shouted with joy, as he rushed forward to embrace him.

“Edric! Edric! thank God he is alive!” exclaimed he. “Edric! my beloved Edric! for God's sake, let us leave this den of horrors! come, come!”

Reassured by his tutor's voice, Edric arose, and taking one hasty, shuddering glance around as the light gleamed on the sarcophagus, he hurried out of the tomb. Neither he nor the doctor spoke as they passed through the vestibule, where the colossal figures still sat in awful majesty; indeed, as their torches were extinguished, their gigantic forms looked still more terrific than before, from the wavering and indistinct light thrown upon them. Edric shuddered as he looked, and hurried on with hasty strides to the place where they had left the guide, whom they found kneeling in a corner, hiding his face in his hands, and roaring

out, "O Lord, defend us ! Heaven have mercy upon us ! Lord have mercy upon us ! Heaven have mercy upon us !"

"He has been in that state for more than an hour," said the doctor mournfully ; "for, after I came to myself again, I tried to rouse him, but all to no purpose."

"Then you also fainted?" said Edric, with difficulty compelling himself to speak.

"Why," resumed the doctor with some hesitation, "I don't know that you can exactly call it fainting ; but the fact was, that when I saw you touch the plate upon the mummy's breast, and start back, looking so horribly frightened, I—I thought I had better call for assistance ; so as I ran for that purpose, somehow or other, I fell down, and lay insensible I don't know how long. When I came to myself, however, I tried to rouse the guide, and when I found I could not, I came to seek you ; but now that we are both recovered, I really don't know what is to become of us ; for this fellow will never be able to show us the way out, and I'm sure I don't know the road."

"Let us try to find it, at any rate," said Edric faintly.

“ Oh, for God’s sake, take me too !” screamed the guide. “ If you have any mercy, don’t leave me in this fearful place.”

“ Take the light then, and lead the way,” said Edric. The guide obeyed, shaking every limb, and every now and then casting a terrified look behind, whilst the quivering flame of the torch betrayed the unsteadiness of the trembling hands that bore it. In this manner they proceeded, starting at every sound, and frightened even at their own shadows, without daring to stop till they reached the plain.

“ Thank God !” cried the doctor, the moment they stepped out of the Pyramid ; looking round him, gasping for breath, and inhaling the fresh air with rapture.

“ Thank God !” reiterated Edric and the guide, as they walked rapidly towards the place where they had left their balloon. When arrived there, however, they looked for it in vain ; and fancying themselves under the influence of a delusion, they rubbed their eyes, and again looked, but without success.

“ Dear me, it is very strange !” said the doctor ; “ this is certainly the place, and yet, where can it be ?”

“Where, indeed!” repeated Edric; “horrors and unaccountable incidents environ us at every step; I am not naturally timid, yet—”

“Ah!” screamed the doctor, as he tumbled over a man lying with his face upon the ground; “Oh!” groaned he, as Edric and the guide with difficulty raised him; “would to Heaven I were safe at home again in my own comfortable little study, indulging on pleasing anticipations of that which I find is any thing in the world but pleasing in reality.”

CHAPTER X.

WE left Dr. Entwerfen in the last chapter uttering a very moral, if not a very new, exclamation on the vanity of human expectations; which had scarcely escaped from his lips, ere cruel Fate, resolving not to be accused in vain, supplied him with yet more abundant cause for lamentation. We have before mentioned, that the doctor had stumbled as he quitted the Pyramids, and that his friends raised him from the ground; but what was his consternation and dismay, when, on looking round to thank them, he found he was surrounded by armed men, who commanded him in the royal name to surrender! Sadly did the doctor turn his woful eyes upon Edric, but, alas! he was in the same predicament as himself; and, in spite of their

entreaties, they were marched off to prison, without being at all informed of what crime they had committed.

Sadly passed the night, and gloomy dawned the day upon the unfortunate travellers, whose minds were harassed and bewildered by the extraordinary success of their awful experiment, and whose misery was infinitely increased by the suspense they had to suffer, both on account of their ignorance of the crime of which they were accused, and its probable punishment if they should be found guilty. Soon after daybreak, however, a summons for them arrived, and they were conducted as criminals before the same magistrate who, the day before, had treated them with such officious kindness.

Very different, however, was the solemn judge who, clothed in all the insignia of magisterial dignity, now sate upon the bench, from the easy, good-tempered gentleman of the Pyramids; and the unlucky travellers saw, in an instant, that they were not likely to experience any favour from their previous acquaintance with him. The court was thronged with people,

and the prisoners saw that they were regarded with curiosity, mingled with horror and supernatural fear. It is not agreeable to feel oneself an object of disgust to any one ; and though Edric magnanimously and frequently repeated to himself that it was quite indifferent to him what such ignorant wretches as Egyptians thought of him ; yet, if he would have avowed the truth, he would have been quite as well contented to have found himself the object of their admiration instead of their hatred ; and he would have been very glad to have been safely at home again ; whilst the doctor openly and loudly lamented the much regretted comforts of his own dear delightful study at Sir Ambrose's. Little time, however, was allowed for reflection ; for as soon as the prisoners were placed at the bar their examination commenced.

“ So, gentlemen !” said the learned judge, “ you stand convicted—no, I mean accused, of a most horrible, heinous, and sacrilegious offence—an offence that makes our hair start with horror from our heads, and every separate lock rise up in vengeance against you.” The justice paused, that the prisoners might admire his elo-

quence ; but, alas ! such was the absorbing nature of self-love, that they were only thinking of what was going to be done with them, and to what this terrible exordium was likely to lead. After a short pause, Edric, supposing they were expected to speak, addressed the judge, and begged to know of what crime they were accused.

“ We are strangers,” said he, “ and gentlemen. We were attracted to your country by an account of the wonders it contained ; we declared our purposes openly ; we have affected no concealment ; and we have done nothing we need blush to avow—”

A confused murmur ran through the court as he spoke, expressive of the utmost disgust and abhorrence ; Edric felt indignant, and he looked round proudly as he added :—

“ Yes, I repeat we have done nothing we need blush to avow, and nothing derogatory to our characters as Englishmen and gentlemen.”

“ Sorcerers ! wizards ! demons in disguise !” cried the crowd. “ Down with them ! burn them ! guillotine them ! destroy them !”

“Is this fair? is this generous?” asked Edric. “If we have done wrong, let our crime be proved, and we are ready to submit to any punishment you may think proper to inflict; but do not condemn us unheard. In England, every man is deemed innocent until he be proved guilty. You boast of having imported and improved upon all the useful regulations of the mother country, and cannot surely have omitted her most glorious law. Let us then have a fair trial, and God forbid that the course of justice should be impeded.”

“You talk well, Sir,” said the judge; “but it’s of no use here. My chair, Sir, is made of witch-elm, and the whole court is lined with consecrated wood; so you may take your familiars to another market, for here they will avail you nothing.”

“Good God!” exclaimed Edric, wringing his hands, “what ignorance! what gross superstition! And yet, in this man’s power are our lives!”

“Oh! oh!” said the judge, who saw his despair, though he did not exactly know the cause; “I have brought you to, have I? Yes, yes;

I tell you, no incantations will be of any avail here ; and so, clerk, call the witnesses—”

The first person examined was the man who had been left in charge of the balloon, and he deposed as follows :—“ Why, Sir,” said he, scratching his head, as though he supposed wisdom dwelt in his fingers, and that their touch might give a little to his brain, “ your honour told me to call out the *posse comitatus*, and set a guard of constables over the gentlemen’s whirligig ; but I thought as how, seeing it was but a queer-looking thing, and not likely to tempt anybody to steal it, I might as well save the gentlemen from throwing their money away upon a parcel of idle fellows, and keep watch over it myself.”

“ And so get the reward instead of them,” observed the judge.

“ Why, your honour,” said the fellow, grinning, “ I thought they might give something that might do *me* some good, but that it would be nothing amongst so many.”

“ Very true !” remarked the judge ; “ Go on Gregory.”

“ Well,” continued Gregory, “ as I was sit-

ting there, thinking of nothing at all, and somehow, I believe, I had fallen into a bit of a dose, I heard a queer sort of a buzzing, and I opened my eyes, and there I saw the gentlemen's whirrigig buzzing and puffing like a steam-engine on fire, and i' th' midst o' the smoke I'll take my oath I saw the mummy of King Cheops as plain as I see his worship there sitting in his throne."

"Oh!" groaned the horror-struck crowd;

"Oh!" groaned the judge and jury.

"Yes," continued the man; "I'll take my oath, if it was the last word I had to speak, that I saw him there vomiting fire, and his big eyes flaring like a fiery furnace."

"Oh!" groaned the judge, crowd, and jury, a degree louder than before.

"And then," resumed Gregory, "something went whiz, and off it all fled together like a flash of lightning—"

"Oh!" shrieked the whole court, in a convulsion of horror. Some of the fair sex in particular, screamed and covered their faces, as though they feared the next exploit of the redoubtable magicians would be to blow up the

court, and send them all flying after the resuscitated mummy.

“With your permission, Sir,” said Edric, as soon as the tumult had somewhat abated, “this proves nothing against either my friend or myself. We are, in fact, injured by it, and we have a claim against you instead of your being able to substantiate a charge against us. We left our balloon, containing valuable articles, and money to a considerable amount, in your charge, or, at least, in the custody of a man whom you recommended. When we quitted the Pyramid, we, of course, inquired for our balloon—it had vanished; and instead of making us amends for our loss, you throw us into prison and tell us a wild, extravagant story of the disappearance of our property, which no man in his senses can possibly believe.”

Another confused murmur, though very different in its character from the former, ran through the court on the conclusion of this speech; and the judge, if such an expression be not profane when speaking of a representative of justice, looked most excessively foolish.

“Had not your worship better call the other

witnesses?" whispered the clerk, pitying the dilemma of his principal.

"True, true!" said the Lycurgus of Anglo-Egypt; "your observation is premature, young man; when the case has been proved against you, it will be time enough for you to think of your defence."

Edric bowed assent, and the examination continued. The guide was the next witness.

"Well, Samuel," said the judge; "what do you know about this matter?"

"Why, Sir," replied Samuel, "ye see, my dame and I were sitting by the fire, and we'd got a black pudding, as we was a going to have for our dinners. And so says dame, 'I likes it cut in slices and fried,' and so says I——"

"Hold, fellow!" cried the judge, with great dignity. "Don't abuse the patience of the Court. We have nothing to do with your dame or the black pudding; it is quite irrelevant to the matter now before us. Go on."

But Samuel could not go on; and, like his predecessor in the witness-box, he only stood still and scratched his head.

“Why don’t you speak, fellow?” asked the clerk.

“Because I doesn’t know what to say,” replied Samuel.

“You must tell all you know about this affair,” pursued the clerk.

“But I doesn’t know where to begin!” rejoined the perplexed witness; “his worship says it is not reverent.”

“Begin with the Pyramid,” said the judge; “and, if you can, give a clear account of all that happened after you left the old passage by the moveable block in the wall that was last discovered.”

“Why I can’t say there was any thing very particular happened, as I know of, Sir,” said Samuel, “after that, till we got to the shaft, and then we went down, Sir, you know, as we always does, till we came to the tomb of King Cheops; and then I turned the gentlemen in by themselves, as we always does, for the ’fect, as Parson Snorum calls it. And then I sits me down i’ the vault, to wait for ’em, and I’d just rolled myself up, and was dozed asleep, when I hears such a noise as if the Pyramids

were all coming tumbling about my ears. So up I jumped and rubbed my eyes, for I did not know very well where I was; and then I saw something that seemed to strike the torches out of the hands of the two great sitting figures, and put them out; and then I saw a great tall figure come gliding by me; and when he came up to the light, I saw his great flaming eyes; and then I fell upon my knees, and he laid hold of my shoulder and griped it. Look, your honour!" laying bare his shoulder as he spoke, and showing the deeply indented marks of the bony fingers of the Mummy. Again a groan of horror and indignation ran through the Court; and when another witness proved that the sarcophagus of Cheops had been examined, and was found empty, the judge seemed to think it was a clear case, and called triumphantly upon Edric for his defence.

"I do not see that what has been proved," said Edric, shuddering in spite of himself, "can affect either my tutor or myself. These people say that a mummy has revived, and, quitting the Pyramid in which he had been so long immured, has flown away with our bal-

loon : but, supposing the tale to be true, what proof have you that we were at all implicated in the business? We were in the Pyramid, it is true ; but so was also this man, whom you have brought forward as a witness against us. Supposing it was the intervention of some human aid that roused the Mummy from its tomb—a fact, by the way, by no means proved, why may not he be the agent instead of us? What is there to fix the charge against us? Have we gained any thing by the adventure? Have we not, on the contrary, been serious losers by it? Where is our balloon, and the valuable articles it contained? If we are wizards, it must be confessed that we are very foolish ones ; for we have lost our property, and thrown ourselves into prison, without reaping the smallest possible advantage? And if we have the power you seem to attribute to us, why do we stay here to be questioned, when we might so easily fly away in a flame of fire, or turn you all to statues, and walk quietly off without your being able to follow us?”

Every one shuddered, and many turned pale

at this speech, seeming to fear that Edric was about to put his suggestions into execution; whilst the judge seemed posed, and in vast perplexity as to what he had better determine;—and the people were dreadfully afraid, lest they might, after all, lose the edifying spectacle of of an *auto-da-fè*, for which they had been so impatiently longing.

Edric marked the hesitation of the judge, and endeavoured to improve it to his own advantage.—“For my part,” continued he, “I am a British subject, and as such, under the protection of my own Court; my Sovereign has a consul here, and to him I make my appeal. I am neither ignoble, nor unknown in my own country,—my name is Montagu, and I am brother to the celebrated general of that family,—whose victories, no doubt, have reached even this remote province!”

“My dear Mr. Montagu!” said the judge, “I really beg your pardon: why did you not acquaint me sooner with your dignity? I dare say there is no truth at all in the charge:—only assure me upon your honour that you did not touch the mummy, and that you know no-

thing of what is become of it at present, and I will instantly order you to be set at liberty."

"I certainly do not know what is become of it," replied Edric. "But—"

"No!" interrupted Dr. Entwerven, coming forward with the air of a determined martyr, "I will not suffer such equivocation. — I would rather perish at the stake, than disavow, for a moment, my opinions, or betray the sacred interests of science with which I feel I am intrusted. No, Sir! my pupil cannot make the public declaration you require. I know he would not—and he cannot if he would;—on the contrary, I avow the fact. We came here for the express purpose of endeavouring to resuscitate the mummy of Cheops, and I glory in the proud thought that we have succeeded." (a groan of horror.) "Yes, Sir, I do not hesitate to avow openly, that the grand object of my life, for several successive years, has been to detect in what consisted the strange, inexplicable secret of life. We live, Sir, we die: we are born, and we are buried: we know that time, sickness, or violence, may kill us; but who can say

in what the mysterious principle of life consists? Various theories have been broached, with which, no doubt, a gentleman of your intelligence and extensive information is well acquainted;—and life has been successively stated to depend upon the heart, the brain, the circulation of the blood, and the respiration of the lungs. All, however, are fallacious; the heart has been wounded, and the brain has been removed, and yet the patient has lived, whilst the operations of respiration and circulation have been kept up for hours, in a body from which the vital spirit had departed. Weighing all these and divers other arguments in my mind, it has struck me, and indeed I may say, that after mature deliberation, I have confidently arrived at the conclusion, that both the faculties which we call life and soul depend entirely upon the nervous system. Do not all philosophers agree that we receive ideas merely through the medium of the senses? And can our senses be operated upon otherwise than through the influence of the nerves? Ergo, the nerves alone convey ideas and sensations to the mind—or rather, the nerves alone are the mind.

Not a single instance, I believe, is known in which life remained after the sensorium had been destroyed, or even seriously injured. What then can be more simple than to suppose life resides there? Pursuing this idea, I have long been convinced that where the nervous system remained uninjured, and the appearance of death was only occasioned by a suspension of the operation of the animal functions, that life might be restored, if, by the intervention of any powerful agency, the nervous system could be excited to re-action; and as this, of course, could not be effected where any kind of decomposition had taken place, it appeared to me that a mummy was the only body upon which the experiment could be tried with the least prospect of success. From various circumstances, however, it has never till now been in my power to realize my wishes on this head; but for a few weeks past, my pupil has entertained similar longings to myself; and yesterday saw our hopes accomplished. Yes; I flatter myself there cannot now remain a shadow of doubt to the world, that, in ordinary cases, before decomposition has taken place, that resuscitation

is not only possible, but probable, and that dead bodies may be easily restored to life."

The horror and consternation produced by this extraordinary speech, amongst the Anglo-Egyptians who heard it, far exceeded any human powers of description. Their terror at what they considered as the doctor's daring impiety, being considerably augmented by their not understanding above one-tenth part of what he said,—and when he had finished, there was a dead pause which no one dared to interrupt, till a sudden gust of wind happening to blow open the door of the justice's retiring-room, the terrified crowd fell back aghast one upon another, pale and trembling, as though they absolutely expected his Infernal Majesty to appear before them in *propria personâ*.

When tranquillity was in some degree restored, the judge ordered the prisoners to be reconducted to prison.

"After the dangerous and impious speech we have just heard," said he, "it would be madness to trust such suspected persons at large; and yet, I would willingly take time to consider the case, and to ascertain whether this young

man be indeed the person he represents himself ; as, I own, I should be sorry to inflict the full penalty of the law upon the brother of her Britannic Majesty's Commander-in-chief."

Remonstrance was useless, and the prisoners were again conducted to their dungeon where they were heavily chained, and left to ruminate upon the calamities that had befallen them. Far from agreeable were these meditations ; for Edric was too angry with the doctor's ill-timed candour to be inclined to speak ; and the doctor was too much ashamed of the effect already produced by his eloquence, to wish to make any farther display of it. At length, as his eyes became accustomed to the faint glimmering light admitted into the dungeon, he perceived the wall to which he was chained was covered with hieroglyphics, and endeavoured to divert his chagrin by examining them.

" I congratulate you, Sir," said Edric, when he perceived this, feeling rather indignant at his tutor's coolness—" I congratulate you most sincerely upon your philosophy, and most earnestly do I wish that I could imitate it."

“ Ah, Edric !” returned the doctor, “ all men are not equally gifted.”

“ With either the art of making blunders, or forgetting them,” said Edric pointedly.

“ These hieroglyphics are very curious,” observed the doctor, who had his own reasons for not wishing to pursue the subject ; “ see how beautifully the ancient Egyptians worked in granite. The fine polish they contrived to give this hard substance would be perfectly astonishing, if we did not recollect that they always edged their tools with emerald dust.”

“ Humph !” said Edric, in a tone which seemed to imply “ and what does it matter to me if they did ?” The doctor, however, was unabashed, and continued : “ You see, as usual, the figure of the bull is frequently repeated here. This wall is evidently built of stones gathered from some ancient ruin. By the way, Edric, I don’t think I ever explained to you why the ancient Egyptians chose a bull as one of their deities, or, rather, as their principal one. You know, that anciently the year began in Taurus, though, by the precession of the equinox, it has now advanced past Aries. Well,

as the ancient Egyptians found that the sun began its career in Taurus, what could be more natural than that they should identify a bull with the vivifying principle? The same theory may account for that legend of the Chaldeans, which supposes the world to have been produced by a bull's striking chaos with his horn—which horn, by the way, was probably the origin of the fable of Amalthea, or the Horn of Plenty."

Edric made no reply, and the doctor dreading a pause, which might give his pupil an opportunity of upbraiding him, went on:—

"Though the Egyptians had a number of divinities, they clearly worshipped only two, viz. the principles of good and evil. Osiris, Isis, Cneph, Phath, Horus, and all their host of inferior deities, were clearly types of the first, and light and life were their essence; whilst Typhon, Campsa, and the malignant deities, exemplified the second, and their attributes were invariably darkness and death."

"For Heaven's sake!" cried Edric, "say no more upon the subject, for it is not in the power of language to describe the horror I have at the mere thought of any thing Egyptian. Let us

escape from this fearful country, and I most sincerely hope nothing may ever happen to recall even its recollection to my imagination."

"Such and so changeable are the desires of human life!" said the doctor. "But a few short weeks since, Egypt was the goal of your wishes, and the prospect of re-animating a corpse—"

"Oh! do not mention it!" cried Edric, shuddering. "Oh God! how justly am I punished, by the very fulfilment of my unhallowed hopes!—even now the fearful eyes of that hideous Mummy seem to glare upon me; and even now I feel the gripe of its horrid bony fingers on my arm!"

"Oh yes, no doubt," exclaimed the doctor, "he pinched hard. He was a king, and kings should have strong arms, you know."

"For God's sake! do not jest upon such a subject," returned Edric; "a subject so wild and fearful, that I can still scarcely believe but that all which has passed was a dream."

"If it be," said the doctor, "it is one from which I freely avow I should be very happy to awake, for I must confess this prison is not at all to my taste."

“ And yet, is it not your fault—?” began Edric.

“ Recrimination, Edric, is always folly,” interrupted the doctor, who did not now feel very proud of the part he had acted before the magistrate, nor very anxious to have it alluded to ; —“ and instead of losing time in regretting past errors, it is the part of a wise man to endeavour to find means of remedying them, and avoiding them in future.”

“ Agreed !” returned Edric ; “ and as I presume you are now convinced your learned dissertation on the probable seat of human life was, to say the least, ill-timed, we will drop the subject. But, even if we get out of prison, what is to become of us ? Our money and valuables were all in the balloon ; and here we are, in a foreign country, entirely destitute.”

“ Not entirely, Edric—not entirely !” cried the doctor, a glow of satisfaction spreading itself again over his face ; “ no, no ; I have guarded against that ; ah, what a thing it is to have foresight ! Well ! some persons are certainly singularly gifted in that line, and it is a happy

thing for you that you have somebody to think for you. See here !” displaying the things as he spoke ; “ here is a bed, bolster, and pillows, ready for inflation ; a portable bedstead, linen, soap, pens, ink, paper, candles, fire, knives, forks, spoons, and money ; all snugly packed up in my walking-stick !”

“ Your supporter,” returned Edric, smiling, “ as you used to call it ; and as it now seems likely to prove, in more senses than one.”

“ Yes, yes !” cried the doctor, “ let us only get out of prison, and all the rest will be easy.”

“ But that only, doctor.”

“ Of that we must take time to consider.”

“ Well, it is some comfort that we are likely to be allowed time enough, as my hint respecting the British consul did not seem thrown away upon the judge. Oh, doctor, if you had not spoken !”

“ Why, surely you would not have given him the declaration he required ?”

“ There was no occasion. He neither wished nor expected more than I had already said.

After what I had mentioned of my family, he only wished a decent pretext for setting us at liberty."

"At any rate," said the doctor, by way of changing the subject, "you see my doctrine is proved completely by the resuscitation of the mummy, for it must have been perfectly restored to life and consciousness, or it could not have flown away with the balloon."

"For my part," returned Edric, "I can scarcely believe what has occurred to be real: there must be some deception. And yet, by whom can a deception have been practised, and for what purpose? In short, I am quite bewildered."

The doctor being much in the same condition, could only sympathize with his pupil; and in this state we must leave them, whilst we inquire respecting the mysterious object of their speculations.

The mummy thus strangely recalled to life, was indeed Cheops! and horrible were the sensations that throbbed through every nerve as returning consciousness brought with it all the pangs of his former existence, and renewed circu-

lation thrilled through every vein. His first impulse was to quit the tomb in which he had been so long immured, and seek again the regions of light and day. Instinct seemed to guide him to this ; for, as yet, a mist hung over his faculties, and ideas thronged in painful confusion through his mind, which he was incapable of either arranging or analyzing.

When however he reached the plain, light and air seemed to revive him and restore his scattered senses ; and gazing wildly around he exclaimed, “ Where am I ? what place is this ? Methinks all seems wondrous, new, and strange ! Where is my father ? And where ! oh, where, is my Arsinöe ? Alas, alas ! ” continued he wildly ; “ I had forgotten—I hoped it was a dream, a fearful dream, for methinks I have been long asleep. Was it, indeed, reality ? Are all, all gone ? And was that hideous scene true ? —those horrors that still haunt my memory like a ghastly vision ? Speak ! speak ! ” continued he, his voice rising in thrilling energy as he spoke—“ speak ! let me hear the sound of another’s voice, before my brain is lost in madness. Have I entered Hades, or am I still on

earth?—yes, yes, it is still the earth, for there the mighty Pyramid, I caused to be erected towers behind me. Yet where is Memphis? where my forts and palaces? What a dark, smoky mass of buildings now surrounds me!—Can this be the once proud Queen of Cities? Oh, no! I see no palaces, no temples—Memphis is fallen. The mighty barrier that protected her splendour from the waste of waters, must have been swept away by the encroaching inroads of the swelling Nile. But is this the Nile?” continued he, looking wildly upon the river; “sure I must be deceived. It is the fatal river of the dead. No papyrine boats glide smoothly on its surface; but strange, infernal vessels, vomiting forth volumes of fire and smoke. Holy Osiris, defend me! where am I? where have I been? A misty veil seems thrown upon the face of nature. Awake, awake!” cried he, with a scream of agony; “set me free; I did not mean to slay him!” Then throwing himself violently upon the ground, he lay for some moments, apparently insensible. Then slowly rising, he looked at himself, and a deep, unnatural shuddering convulsed his

whole frame. His sensations of identity became confused, and he recoiled with horror from himself: "These are the trappings of a mummy!" murmured he in a hollow whisper. "Am I then dead?" The next instant, however, he broke into a wild laugh of derision:—"Poor, feeble wretch!" cried he; "what do I fear?—Need *I* tremble, in whose bosom dwells everlasting fire? No—no! let me rather rejoice. I cannot be more wretched; why then should I dread a change? I should rather welcome it with transport, and bravely dare my fate."

At this moment the car of the balloon caught his eye: "Ah! what is that?" cried he; "I am summoned! 'Tis the boat of Hecate, ready to ferry me across the Mærian Lake, to learn my final doom. I come! I come! I fear no judgment! My hell is here!" and, striking his bosom, leaped into the car, and stamped violently against its sides.

At this instant Gregory awoke; his terror was not surprising. The dried, distorted features of the Mummy looked yet more hideous than before, when animated by human passions;

and his deep hollow voice, speaking in a language he did not understand, fell heavily upon his ear, like the groans of fiends. Gregory tried to scream, but he could not utter a sound. He attempted to fly, but his feet seemed nailed to the spot on which he stood, and he remained with his eyes fixed upon the Mummy, gasping for breath, while a cold sweat distilled from every pore. In the mean time, Cheops had stumbled over the box containing the apparatus for making inflammable air, and striking it violently, had unintentionally set the machinery in motion. The pipes, tubes, and bellows, instantly began to work ; and the Indian-rubber bottle became gradually inflated, till it swelled to an enormous magnitude, and fluttered in the air like an imprisoned bird, beating itself against the massive walls to which it was still attached.

“ Still it goes not,” cried Cheops, again stamping impatiently. The quicksilver vapour bottle had fallen beneath his feet, and it broke as he trod upon it. The vapour burst from it with inconceivable violence, and tearing the balloon from its fastenings, sent it off through the air, like an arrow darting from a bow.

CHAPTER XI.

IN the mean time, Sir Ambrose Montagu had been presented to the Queen, and the evening after his arrival in town he attended her drawing-room. The splendour of the English Court at this period defies description. The walls of the room in which the Queen received her guest, were literally one blaze of precious stones, and these being disposed in the form of bouquets, wreaths, and trophies, were so contrived as to quiver with every movement. These magnificent walls were relieved by a colonnade of pillars of solid gold, around which, were twined wreaths of jewels fixed also upon elastic gold wires, so as to tremble every instant. The throne of the Queen was formed of gold filagree.

beautifully wrought, richly chased and superbly ornamented, whilst behind it was an immense plate of looking-glass, stretching the whole length and height of the apartment, and giving the whole the effect of a fairy palace. The carpet spread upon the floor of this sumptuous saloon was so exact an imitation of green moss, with exquisitely beautiful groups of flowers thrown carelessly upon it, that a heedless spectator might have been completely deceived by the delicacy of their shape and richness of their colouring, and have stooped to pick them up, supposing them to be real. The suit of rooms appropriated to dancing was equally splendid, and fitted up in the same manner, save that the floors were painted to imitate the effect of the carpet, and rows of trees were placed on each side, hung with lamps. This imitative grove was so exquisitely managed, that the spectator could scarcely believe it artificial; and the music for dancing proceeded from its leaves, or from automaton birds placed carelessly amongst its branches.

The dresses of the Queen and her attendants

were worthy of the apartment they occupied. Brocaded silks, cloth of gold, embroidered velvets, gold and silver tissues, and gossamer nets made of the spider's web, were mingled with precious stones and superb plumes of feathers in a profusion quite beyond description. The most beautiful of the female habiliments, however, were robes made of woven asbestos, which glittered in the brilliant light like molten silver. The ladies were all arrayed in loose trowsers, over which hung drapery in graceful folds; and most of them carried on their heads, streams of lighted gas forced by capillary tubes into plumes, fleurs-de-lis, or in short any form the wearer pleased; which *jets de feu* had an uncommonly chaste and elegant effect. The gentlemen were all clothed in the Spanish style, with slashed sleeves, short cloaks, and large hats, ornamented with immense plumes of ostrich feathers, it being considered in those days extremely vulgar to appear with the head uncovered. It would, perhaps, have been difficult to imagine more perfect models of male and female beauty than those which now adorned the Court of Queen Claudia, for the *beau ideal* of the painter's fancy seemed realized, nay sur-

passed by the noble living figures there collected. The women were particularly lovely, and as they stood gathered round their Queen, or lightly threaded the mazes of the graceful dance, dressed as above described, their brows bound with circlets of precious stones, and their glossy hair hanging in rich luxuriant ringlets upon their ivory shoulders, they looked like a group of Houris, or the nymphs of Circe, ready with sparkling eyes and witching voices to lure men to destruction.

Claudia was very handsome, and though her countenance wanted expression, her noble figure and majestic bearing well qualified her to play her part as Queen amongst this bevy of beauties, with becoming dignity. There is something in the habit of command, when it has been long enjoyed, that gives an imposing majesty to the manner, which the parvenu great strive in vain to imitate ; and Claudia had this in perfection. The consciousness of beauty, power, and high birth swelled in her bosom ; and even when she wished to be affable, she was only condescending.

She now, however, received Sir Ambrose most

graciously ; she gave him her snowy hand to kiss, and addressed a few words of compliment to him, which sank deep into his heart. It is one of the privileges of greatness easily to excite emotion ; one word of commendation from those above us, far outweighs all the laboured flattery of our inferiors. Thus the words of Claudia, and the warm praise she bestowed on Edmund, gave the purest transport to his father's heart ; and affected him so violently, that he would have fallen at her feet, had he not been supported by a young man who stood near him.

“ You seem faint, Sir,” said the youth ;
“ will you permit me to lead you to a seat.”

“ Thank you, thank you,” cried Sir Ambrose, gratefully accepting the proffered aid, and leaning on his youthful supporter as they left the presence. The stranger carefully placed Sir Ambrose upon a sofa, under the harmonious trees we have already mentioned ; and as he stood before him, asking if he should procure him some refreshments, Sir Ambrose had full leisure to survey his face and figure : both were handsome in the extreme. The youth

seemed scarcely to have passed the age of boyhood, and his well-proportioned form displayed all the lightness and activity of youth ; but wit and good-humour laughed in his bright blue eyes, whilst animated features and an enchanting smile completed an *ensemble* which few bosoms were frozen enough to resist. Sir Ambrose was irresistibly pleased, and longed to know to whom he was indebted for so much kindness. But he felt too delicate to ask the question in direct terms, and there was nothing in the youth's exterior to mark decidedly to what rank in life he might belong.

He was handsomely dressed, and his air and manner appeared slightly foreign ; though this might be fancy, arising from Sir Ambrose's ignorance of the manners and habits of the Court. There also seemed something droll about him, and the air with which he submitted to Sir Ambrose's scrutiny was excessively comic.

“ Is there any thing I can do for you ? ” asked he at length, when he thought the baronet's curiosity had had time to satisfy itself.

“ Nothing,” replied Sir Ambrose ; “ but—”

“But—you would like to know who I am?” said the stranger.

“I own,” returned Sir Ambrose, blushing, “I would fain know to whom I am so much obliged.”

“My name is Henry Seymour,” replied the youth. “I was born in Spain, of English parents. I am an orphan and in want; and have been introduced to the Queen, in hopes of getting a place at Court, by one of her Majesty’s physicians, Dr. Coleman.”

“I am quite ashamed,” said Sir Ambrose, “that my indiscreet curiosity—that is, that you should have thought—I mean, that I should have asked for—”

“In short,” interrupted the youth, “you think, perhaps, that I meant to call you rude by giving such a long account of myself: but I always do so in similar cases; it saves trouble.”

Sir Ambrose smiled. “You are a singular youth,” said he; “I should like to know you better.”

“And I,” returned the stranger, “should be proud to obtain the friendship of Sir Am-

brose Montagu, and shall always reckon the day that introduced me to his notice, as one of the happiest of my life."

A glow of pleasure spread over the animated features of the youth as he spoke, and Sir Ambrose fancied his accent sounded slightly Irish: convinced, however, that he must be mistaken, he did not remark it, but only exclaimed, "You know me, then?"

Before the stranger had time to utter a reply, the Duke of Cornwall, and the Princesses Rosabella and Elvira approached, and prevented him from speaking.

"How do you find yourself, my dear friend?" said the duke; "they told us you were ill."

"I have been slightly so," returned Sir Ambrose; "and I believe I should have fainted, and paid my respects to my Sovereign quite orientally, if this gentleman had not saved me."

"I am sure we are very much obliged to you, Sir," said the duke, turning to the youth.

"Indeed, we feel most grateful," said Elvira.

The stranger made a suitable reply, and after a short conversation, in which Dr. Coleman joined, that worthy gentleman having been also drawn to the spot by the report of Sir Ambrose's illness, he requested the favour of Elvira's hand for the dance.

"That is a very nice young man," said the duke, when he was gone to join the dancers: "I admire him much."

"He deserves every thing you can say in his favour," returned Dr. Coleman: "I have known him long, and I love him as a son."

When Elvira retired to her chamber that night, she sighed so often, and so deeply, that Emma, who assisted at her toilet, could not avoid remarking her uneasiness. "Are you ill, my dear mistress?" asked she, in a tone of feeling; "what else can have produced this sudden change?"

"I am quite well," said Elvira, again sighing.

"Why then do you sigh and look so thoughtful?"

"I was thinking of Lord Edmund."

"Indeed! I did not think he had the

power to make you sigh. He has reason to feel flattered."

"Oh, Emma! I wish he were like Henry Seymour!"

"And who is Henry Seymour?" asked Emma, smiling, and beginning to suspect that she had been rather hasty in fancying Lord Edmund had occasion to flatter himself on account of the Princess's *tristesse*.

"One of the most fascinating of human beings," returned Elvira; "so gay, and yet so tender. He is not, perhaps, so regularly handsome as Edmund, but he has such expressive features, and his soul gives such animation to his countenance."

"Poor Edmund!" thought Emma: but as she was too discreet to say so, Elvira was not aware of the interpretation that might be put on what she was saying; and she went on, raving of the pleasures of the ball, till she was fairly in bed.

The following day was appointed for the triumphal entry of Lord Edmund, and the greatest part of the night preceding it, was passed by Sir Ambrose in the greatest agita-

tion. He could not sleep; he rose several times from his bed, in excessive anxiety, to listen for the repetition of noises which he fancied he heard: once he opened his window—all was still. His room looked into the garden of Mr. Montagu, which, as we have already mentioned, shelved down to the Thames, and the calm moonlight slept peacefully upon the tall, thick trees, and verdant lawn that spread before him. The evening breeze felt cool and refreshing; but Sir Ambrose sighed, and a strange fear of something he could not wholly define hung over him.

He again retired to bed, and at length sank into a feverish and uneasy dose. At daybreak, however, a thundering of cannon announced the arrival of the important day. Sir Ambrose started from his pillow at the first discharge, and the solemn sound thrilled through every nerve as it pealed along the sky. Scarcely had its echoes died upon the ear, when another, and another peal succeeded; and the heart of Sir Ambrose throbbed in his bosom almost to suffocation, as he sate, resting his head upon his hands, and striving, though ineffectually, to

stop his ears from the solemn sound, which seemed to absorb his every faculty, and strike almost with the force of a blow upon his nerves.

Whilst he was still in this position, Father Morris entered the room.—“Come, come, Sir Ambrose!” cried he, “are you not ready? The Queen has sent for us, and the procession is just ready to set off.”—Sir Ambrose started: he attempted to dress himself, but his trembling hands refused to perform their office, and Father Morris and Abelard were obliged to attire him, and lead him down to join his friend, the duke, who was waiting for him impatiently.

It has often been said that the anticipation of pleasure is always greater than the reality: this, however, was not the case in the present instance, as the brilliancy of Lord Edmund’s triumph was far greater than even the imaginations of the spectators had before dared to conceive. The duke and Sir Ambrose, attended by Father Morris, found the individuals who were to compose the procession of the Queen assembled in the extensive gardens belonging to the superb palace of Somerset

House. These fine gardens, spreading their verdant groves along the banks of the river, adorned by all the charms of nature and art, and enriched by some of the finest specimens of sculpture in the world, were now crowded with all the beauty and rank of England, who, waiting for the arrival of their Sovereign, formed an *ensemble* no other nation in the world could hope to imitate.

In the centre walk, appeared the superb Arabian charger of the Queen, led by his grooms, and magnificently caparisoned. His bridle was studded with precious stones, and his hoofs cased in gold ; whilst his blue satin saddle and housings were richly embroidered and fringed with the same metal. The noble animal, whose flowing mane and tail swept the ground, paced proudly along, tossing his head on high, and spurning the ground on which he trod, as though conscious he should perform a conspicuous part in the grand pageant about to take place. All now was ready, but yet Queen Claudia did not appear.

“ It is very strange, but lately it is always so,” said Lord Maysworth to Lord Gustavus de

Montfort, who had been for some time engaged in earnest conversation with Father Morris. Lord Gustavus started at the sound of his friend's voice in some apparent confusion, whilst Father Morris replied in his usual soft, insinuating tones, "Perhaps her Majesty may be indisposed, and have slept rather longer than usual."

"Most likely," returned Lord Maysworth; "yet it is strange the same thing should happen so often. — If you remember," continued he, again addressing Lord Gustavus, "I made the same observation the morning of her last levee. Indeed I have frequently made it lately, and I have observed that she looks pale and languid."

"Here she comes, at any rate! and for my part, I think I never saw her look better," said Dr. Hardman, who had now joined them, and who, notwithstanding his violent politics, was one of the physicians of the Court. The indolence of Claudia, which, indeed, seemed daily increasing, having induced her to overlook what another Sovereign would have resented.

Claudia did indeed look well, and her dress suited well with her style of beauty. Her trowsers and vest were of pale blue satin; whilst over her shoulders was thrown a long flowing drapery of asbestos silk, which hanging in graceful folds, swept the ground as she walked along, shining in the sun like a robe of woven silver. On her head, she wore a splendid tiara of diamonds; and in her hand, she bore the regal sceptre, surmounted by a dove, and richly ornamented with precious stones. Thus gorgeously attired, surrounded by the ladies of her household, she issued from her palace; and whilst her kneeling subjects bent in humble homage around her, she mounted her noble charger. Cannon were now fired in rapid succession; the bells of every church rang in merry peals, and martial music mingled in the clamour. The palace gates were thrown open, and the procession poured from them along the streets, where crowds of human beings bustled to and fro, eager to catch a glimpse of the sumptuous spectacle.

First advanced a long double line of monks,

arrayed in sacerdotal pomp, and bearing immensely thick lighted tapers in their hands; chanting thanksgiving for the victory. They were followed by chorister-boys, flinging incense from silver vases, that hung suspended by chains in their hands, and chanting also; their shrill trebles mingling with the deep bass voices of the priests in rich and mellow harmony. The Queen next appeared, her prancing charger led by grooms, whilst beautiful girls, elegantly attired, walked on each side of their Sovereign, scattering flowers in her path from fancy baskets made of wrought gold. Behind the Queen, rode the ladies of her household and the principal nobles of her Court, the superb plumes of ostrich feathers in the large Spanish hats of the latter, with their immense mustachios, and open shirt collars, giving them the air of some of Vandyck's best pictures. As they rode slowly along, their noble Arabians paced proudly, and champed the bit, impatient of restraint.

The ladies of the Court, superbly dressed in open litters, next appeared, borne upon the shoulders of men splendidly clad in rich live-

ries. Amongst these, were Elvira and Rosabella.

These were followed by monks and boys as before, but singing a somewhat different strain. It was now a chant of glory and triumph that swelled upon the ear, for these preceded the duke and Sir Ambrose; who, the one as uncle to the Queen, and the other as father of the expected hero, occupied the post of honour. The two venerable old men sate hand in hand in a sumptuous car drawn by two Arabian horses, and were followed by a large body of the Queen's guards.

The costliness and variety of the dresses worn this day, were quite beyond description. Many of the ladies had turbans of woven glass; whilst others carried on their hats very pretty fountains made of glass dust, which, being thrown up in little jets by a small perpetual motion wheel, sparkled in the sun like real water, and had a very singular effect.

In this manner the procession advanced towards Blackheath Square, said to be the largest and finest in the world, where the meeting between the Queen and her general was appoint-

ed to take place. Amongst the numerous balloons that floated in the air, enjoying this magnificent spectacle, was one containing Father Murphy, who had been prevented, by a sprained ankle, from joining in the procession, and the family of Mr. Montagu—and nothing could be more enthusiastic than their delight, as they looked down upon the splendid scene below them. Few things, indeed, could be imagined finer than the sight of this gorgeous *cortege*, winding slowly along a magnificent street, supposed to be five miles long, leading from Blackfriar's Bridge, through Greenwich, to Blackheath.

Sumptuous rows of houses, or rather palaces, lined the sides of this superb street; the terraces and balconies before which, were crowded with persons of all ages, beautifully attired, waving flags of different colours, richly embroidered and fringed with gold, whilst festoons of the choicest flowers hung from house to house. We have already said the air was thronged with balloons, and the crowd increased every moment. These aërial machines, loaded with spectators till they were in dan-

ger of breaking down, glittered in the sun, and presented every possible variety of shape and colour. In fact, every balloon in London or the vicinity had been put in requisition, and enormous sums paid, in some cases, merely for the privilege of hanging to the cords that attached the cars, whilst the innumerable multitudes that thus loaded the air, amused themselves by scattering flowers upon the heads of those who rode beneath.

Besides balloons, however, a variety of other modes of conveyance fluttered in the sky. Some dandies bestrode aërial horses, inflated with inflammable gas; whilst others floated upon wings, or glided gently along, reclining gracefully upon aërial sledges, the last being contrived so as to cover a sufficient column of air for their support. As the procession approached the river, the scene became still more animated; innumerable barges of every kind and description shot swiftly along, or glided smoothly over the sparkling water. Some floated with the tide in large boat-like shoes; whilst others, reclining on couch-shaped

cars, formed of mother of pearl, were drawn forward by inflated figures representing the deities or monsters of the deep.

When the Queen reached a spot near Greenwich, where, through a spacious opening, the river, in all its glorious majesty, burst upon her, she paused, and commanded her trumpeters to advance and sound a flourish. They obeyed, and after a short pause were answered by those of Lord Edmund; the sound, mellowed by the distances, pealing along the water in dulcet harmony. Delighted with this response, which announced the arrival of Lord Edmund and his troops at the appointed place, the procession of the Queen was again set in motion, and in a short time arrived at Blackheath.

The noble square in which the meeting was to take place, was already thronged with soldiers; whilst every house that surrounded it was covered with spectators. No trees or fantastical ornaments spoiled the simple grandeur of this immense space; the houses that surrounded it, built in exact uniformity, each having a peristyle supported by Corinthian

pillars, and a highly decorated façade, looked like so many Athenian temples. As the cortege of the Queen entered the square, the soldiers formed an opening to receive it, and reverentially knelt on each side, with reversed arms, and bending banners as she passed. In the centre was Lord Edmund, surrounded by his staff, all in polished armour ; for since an invention had been discovered of rendering steel perfectly flexible, it had been generally used in war. Lord Edmund's helmet, however, was thrown off, and his fine countenance was displayed to the greatest advantage, as he and his officers threw themselves from their war steeds to kneel before the Queen. Claudia, also, descended from her charger, and as she stood in her glittering robes, surrounded on all sides by her kneeling subjects, she looked, indeed, their Sovereign. With becoming dignity, she addressed a few words of thanks and commendation to Lord Edmund, as he knelt before her, his thick, dark, brown hair falling in clustering curls over his noble forehead. His graceful figure was shown to the utmost advantage, by his closely fitting armour, over which, however,

upon the present occasion was thrown a short cloak of fine scarlet cloth, richly embroidered with gold, and fastened in front by a cord and superb tassels, made entirely of the same metal. He looked a living personification of the God of War.

The Queen raised him from the ground in the most gracious manner; and then turning to the still kneeling soldiers, she made a short speech to them, of the same nature as that which she had addressed to Lord Edmund: after which, again mounting her palfrey, she made Lord Edmund ride by her side, and prepared to return to town. Edmund's quick eye had discovered, and exchanged looks of affection with his father and friends, though the etiquette of his present situation did not permit him to do more; and he now rode proudly by the side of the Queen, gracefully bowing to the assembled crowd as he passed along, his heart beating with pleasure at the thought that his triumph was witnessed by those most dear to him; whilst his noble Arabian tossed his head and champed his bit as he pranced forward, as though he also knew

the part he was performing in the splendid ceremony.

Acclamations rent the sky as the procession advanced, and showers of roses were rained down upon the Queen and her general from the balloons above; from which, also, flags waved in graceful folds, and flapped in the wind, as the balloons floated along the sky. Every one seemed delighted with the grandeur of this splendid pageant; but no one experienced more pleasure than the occupiers of the balloon of Mr. Montagu. Even that oblivious gentleman himself was moved to exclaim, that he never was more enchanted in his life; whilst the raptures of his spouse were so excessive, that, like the spectators of the stag-hunt on the lake of Killarney, she was in imminent danger of throwing herself overboard in her ecstasy: and Clara clasped her hands together, in all the transports of childish delight, her sparkling eyes and animated looks bearing ample witness to her gratification.

“What shouting! what a noise!” exclaimed Mr. Montagu; “I declare it puts me in mind

of the acclamations in the time of Nero, when the Romans shouted in concert, and birds fell from the skies with the noise !”

“ La ! papa, is that true ?” asked Clara.

“ Och, and that’s a strange kind of a question,” said Father Murphy, “ and one I wouldn’t like a child of mine to be putting.”

“ And why not ?” asked Mr. Montagu, somewhat indignantly.

“ Because a child ought always to believe what his father says, before he hears him open his mouth.”

“ How well the Queen looks !” observed Mrs. Montagu, to whom the reverend father’s remark was far from agreeable. “ It was said a short time since, that she had lost her appetite and could get no rest ; but I think she doesn’t seem to have much the matter with her now.”

“ My nurse says she ’s being poisoned,” cried Clara, “ and that it would be no great matter if she was, for then the people would have to choose a Queen for themselves, and they might make what terms they pleased with her.”

“ And is this the kind of servant you suffer to attend on my daughter, Mrs. Montagu ?”

demanded the indignant father, roused from his usual lethargy by the importance of the occasion; "Clara shall go to a boarding-school to-morrow, and her nurse shall be dismissed. My child shall not be taught to utter treason."

"Dear me! Mr. Montagu," replied the wife, "what a serious matter you make of a little harmless gossip!"

"Gossip do you call it?" repeated her husband; "it is such gossip as might cost me my head, and you your fortune, if it were to reach unfriendly ears."

An awkward pause followed this speech, which no one seemed inclined to break, till Clara exclaimed, "Dear me! what a pretty horse my cousin Edmund rides!"

"I think that's a prettier that comes after him," said Father Murphy.

"What, that one with his head hanging down and his mane sweeping the ground?" asked Mrs. Montagu.

"Yes.—And it's a very handsome young man also that walks by the side of him," replied Father Murphy.

"His hands are chained as if he were a pri-

soner ; and he looks like a foreigner," observed Mr. Montagu, who had relapsed into one of his fits of abstraction : " I wonder what can bring him there !"

" La ! Mr. Montagu, how you talk !" exclaimed his wife, " you know my nephew, Lord Edmund, has just gained a battle, and what can be more natural than that he should have taken prisoners ?"

" True," rejoined Mr. Montagu with the utmost naïveté, " I never thought of that !"

" Och, and it's a barbarous custom that of putting chains about the hands of the prisoners," said Father Murphy, " as if it was not bad enough to be a prisoner without looking like one."

" Poor fellow !" cried Clara, " I should like to go and let him loose. He looks very melancholy !"

" How great my nephew Lord Edmund looks !" continued Mrs. Montagu : " I declare if he were a real king he couldn't have a grander appearance. And then to see the poor old gentleman his father, my brother-in-law, Sir Ambrose, sitting there hand-in-hand with the Duke

of Cornwall himself—I declare it does my heart good to look at them !”

Whilst Mrs. Montagu was thus exulting in the reflected grandeur that shone upon her, from being sister-in-law to the person who sat hand-in-hand with the duke, the joy and delight of that exalted personage had been almost as great as her own.

His impatience during the whole procession from London had been excessive; and the moment he saw Edmund, he rubbed his hands in ecstasy, and jumping up in his seat almost overturned Sir Ambrose, who was also bending forward eagerly gazing upon his son. “There ! there he is !” cried the duke. “Look how handsome he is ! Oh the young rogue ! there’ll be many a heart lost to-day, I warrant me ! Look at him, how the colour comes into his cheeks as the Queen speaks to him ! Look ! Now he helps her on her horse—and now see, he’s looking round for us ! There I caught his eye—see, Sir Ambrose ! don’t you see him ? —Surely you arn’t crying, my old friend ? Why you’ll make me as great a fool as yourself —God bless him ! I am sure I don’t know

any thing we have to cry at ; but we are two old simpletons."

Father Morris, who had joined the procession of monks, was almost as much affected as his patron. Indeed his affection for Edmund seemed the only human passion remaining in his ascetic breast. Cold even to frigidity in his exterior, Father Morris seemed to regard the scenes passing around him but as the moving figures of a magic lantern, which glittered for a moment in glowing colours, and then vanished into darkness, leaving no trace behind :—whilst he, unmoved as the wall over which the gaudy but shadowy pageant had passed, saw them alternately vanish and re-appear without the slightest emotion being excited in his mind. Under this statue-like appearance, however, Father Morris concealed passions as terrific as those which might be supposed to throb in the breast of a demon : though never did his self-command seem relaxed for a moment, but when the interests of Edmund were in question. On the present occasion, however, joy swelled in his bosom almost to suffocation, as he raised his eyes to Heaven, and, wringing his hands together, exclaimed, " Oh ! it is too—too much !"

There is something indescribably affecting in seeing strong emotion expressed by those who are generally calm and unimpassioned; and Sir Ambrose, by whom this burst of feeling from his confessor was quite unexpected, gazed at him with the utmost surprise, and, strange to tell, though the monk had now lived nearly twenty years under his roof, it was the first time he had seen his head completely uncovered. Father Morris's cowl had now, however, fallen off entirely, and displayed the head of a man between forty and fifty, whose fine features bore the traces of what he had endured. His noble expressive brow seemed wrinkled more by care than age, and his sable locks had evidently become "grizzled here and there," prematurely. Sir Ambrose gazed upon him intently, for the peculiar expression of his features seemed to recal some half-forgotten circumstance to his mind, dimly obscured, however, by the mist of time. The earnestness with which he consequently regarded the monk, seemed at length to recal the latter to himself. He started, and, whilst a deep crimson flushed his usually sallow countenance, he hastily resumed his cowl, and appeared

again to the eyes of the spectators, the same cold, unimpassioned, abstracted being as before.

The ovation had now nearly reached Blackfriars' bridge, at the entrance to which, a triumphal arch had been erected. The moment the Queen and her heroic general passed under it, a small figure of Fame was contrived to descend from its entablature, and, hovering over the hero, to drop a laurel crown upon his head. Shouts of applause followed this well-executed device; and the passengers in the balloons, wondering at the noise, all pressed forward at the same moment to ascertain the cause of such continued acclamations. The throng of balloons became thus every instant more dense. Some young city apprentices having hired each a pair of wings for the day, and not exactly knowing how to manage them, a dreadful tumult ensued; and the balloons became entangled with the winged heroes and each other in inextricable confusion.

The noise now became tremendous; the conductors of the balloons swearing at each other the most refined oaths, and the ladies screaming

in concert. Several balloons were rent in the scuffle and fell with tremendous force upon the earth; whilst some cars were torn from their supporting ropes, and others roughly upset. Luckily, however, the whole of England was at this time so completely excavated, that falling upon the surface of the earth was like tumbling upon the parchment of an immense drum, and consequently only a deep hollow sound was returned as cargo after cargo of the demolished balloons struck upon it; some of them, indeed, rebounded several yards with the violence of the shock.

Amongst those who fell from the greatest height, and of course rebounded most violently, were the unfortunate individuals who composed the party of Mr. Montagu, an unlucky apprentice having poked his right wing through the silk of their balloon, in endeavouring to avoid the charge of an ærial horseman, who found his Æolian steed too difficult to manage in the confusion. The car containing our friends was in consequence precipitated to earth so rapidly, as for the moment to deprive them of breath.

“Och, and I’m killed entirely!” cried Father Murphy.

“Oh, my bonnet! my beautiful bonnet!” sobbed Mrs. Montagu; whilst Clara, dreadfully frightened, began to cry; and Mr. Montagu, whose ideas were generally a long time travelling to his brain, particularly upon occasions of sudden alarm, stood completely silent, stupidly gazing about him, as though he had not the least notion what could possibly have happened. Indeed, it was not till a full hour afterwards, that he found himself sufficiently recovered to exclaim, “Dear me! I do think we were very near being killed!”

In the mean time, the confusion in the air still continued; piercing screams that demons were in the air, mingled horribly with the crashing of balloons, the cries of the sufferers, and the successive falling of heavy weights. The situation of the crowd below, however, was infinitely worse than that of those above. The momentum of the falling bodies being fearfully increased by the distance they had to descend, those below had no chance of escape, and were inevitably crushed to death by their weight,

whilst the agonizing shrieks of the unfortunate wretches who saw their danger coming from a distance, yet were so jammed together in the crowd that they could not fly, rang shrilly upon the ear, and pierced through every heart.

At this moment a dreadful scream ran through the crowd, and the horse of Queen Claudia, his bridle broken, his housings torn, his nostrils distended, and his sides streaming with gore, rushed past—"Oh God! the Queen! the Queen!" burst from every voice, and one general rush took place towards the spot from whence the cry had proceeded.

Beneath the triumphal arch, and partially sheltered by its shade, lay the bleeding body of Claudia, supported by Edmund. By her side, knelt Rosabella, who, assisted by Father Morris, was applying restoratives; whilst Henry Seymour was endeavouring to restore Elvira, who had fainted in the arms of her father, and Sir Ambrose, his face streaming with blood, stood at a little distance amongst a group of courtiers, several of whom had also experienced severe injuries. The tumult in

the air still continued; groans and shrieks and exclamations, that the atmosphere was supernaturally haunted, were heard in many places; and some persons declared the accident to be the work of demons. A current of wind had blown those balloons that had become unmanageable across the city, while the others, terrified almost to madness, appeared still contending with some fearful monster in the sky.

The courtiers, however, heeded not this disturbance; for all their attention was occupied by the apparently expiring Queen, whose long-drawn sighs, and convulsed bosom, seemed to threaten her instant dissolution.

“She’s gone!” cried Lord Gustavus de Montfort, as her bosom heaved with a deep, heavy sigh, and then all was still.

“Yes, she’s dead!” repeated Lord Noodle.

“She is certainly dead!” reiterated Lord Doodle.

And then these sapient counsellors of the apparently departed Queen shook their wise heads in sympathy.

“Hush ! she breathes !” cried Lord Edmund.

For some moments, the courtiers stood in breathless anxiety watching the body, and fearing to move lest they should break the awful silence that prevailed, though their hearts throbbed till the pulsations were almost audible.

Fearful was the pause that now ensued ! All were suffering from the torments of hope or fear ; for all knew that the interests of the whole community hung upon her breath. Most of the courtiers also either hoped to gain places, or feared to lose them, whilst all trembled at the uncertainty that seemed to rest upon their future destiny, and the prospect of the anarchy which the purposed mode of electing their future Sovereign might create. The interest which the fate of the Queen excited was thus intense, and the courtiers hung over her body with streaming eyes and motionless limbs to watch the result.

At this instant, a fearful and tremendous yell ran through the air ; and the car con-

taining the Mummy, which had been for some time entangled with the other balloons, fell to the ground with tremendous force, close to the expiring Queen. The gigantic figure of Cheops started from it as it fell—his ghastly eyes glaring with unnatural lustre upon the terrified courtiers, who ran screaming in agony in all directions, forgetting every thing but the horrid vision before them.

END OF VOL. I.

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